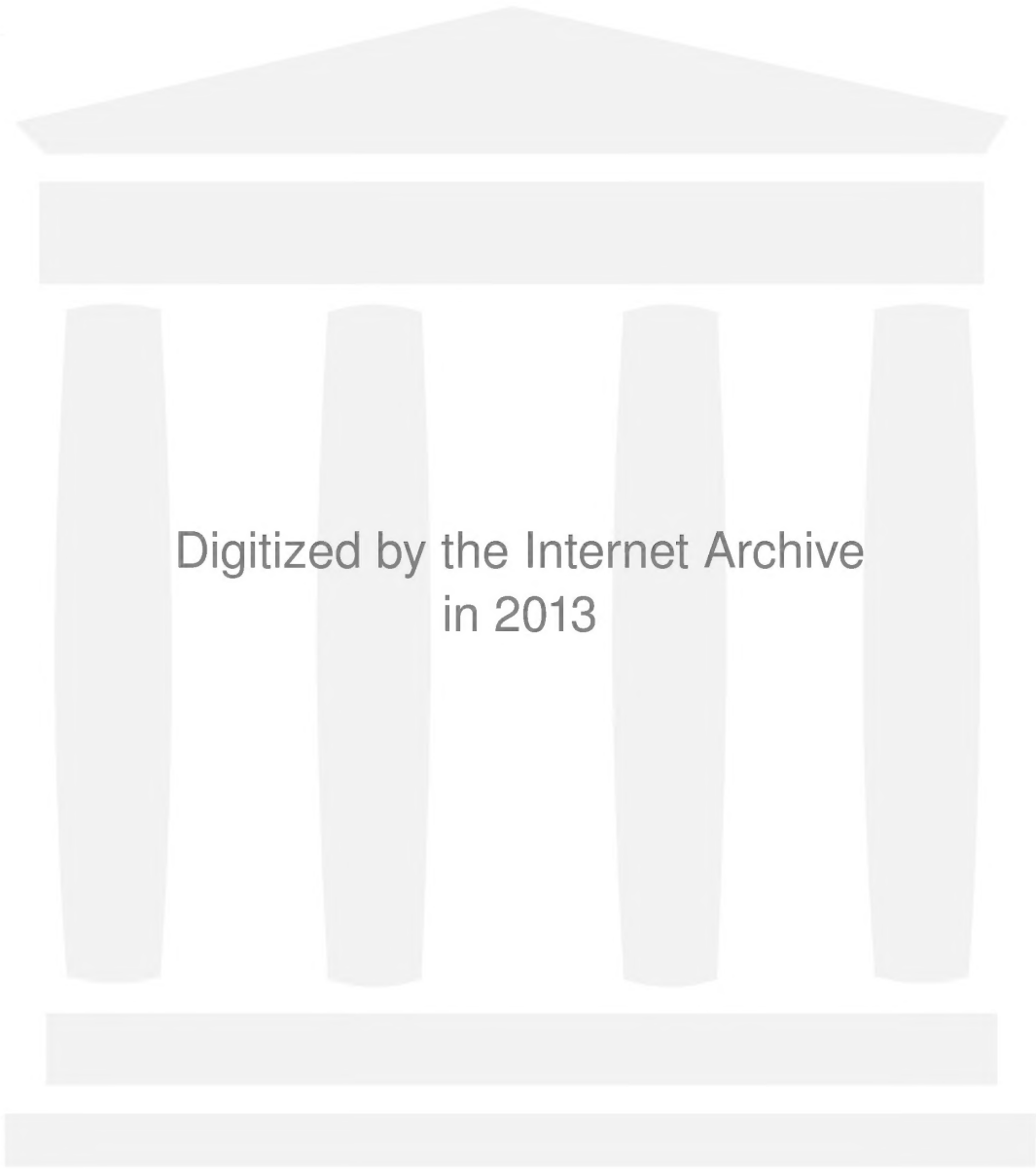

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HARPER'S



THE BOOK THIEF

Too Reckless a Passion for Books Can Lead to the Writing of a Great Novel—or to the Commission of a Great Crime. A Strange, True Tale of Bibliomania

By Philip Weiss

IS THERE A DOCTRINE IN THE HOUSE?

In Search of a Clinton Foreign Policy

Jean Bethke Elshtain, Kim Holmes, Kenneth Anderson, Will Marshall, Rep. Frank McCloskey, Aryeh Neier

HORT STORY
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Wide Track has b
pretty famous in hi
of the woods since 1
Factually, there have
four Wide Trac
kind of like all th
canine movie sta

When David McDavid became a Saturn retailer, his TV co-star took some time off to dig holes and get his belly scratched.

Like a lot of car dealers, David always believed his commercials just weren't any good without some kind of animal in them. So "Wide Track," his advertising, uh, *bark*-person, has had the job, over the years, of representing all of David's different dealerships.

It was a good fit. David sold cars the way his Daddy taught him ("You trade 'em, swap 'em, and deal 'em"), and people kept coming in—to shake the dog's paw and maybe buy a car. David sold a lot of cars that way, but he didn't necessarily like the way it felt. It was just the way things in the car business had always seemed to work.



At the height of Wide Track mania, David used his dog just about everywhere—on license plates, on neon signs, even to hold up his trousers.

When Saturn got started, we asked a lot of people—car dealers *and* customers—if there was a better way to sell cars. And their answers made sense. What if we didn't use the hard sell? What if we tried harder to earn our customers' trust? What if we *advertised without gimmicks?*

After some skepticism ("Y'all couldn't [illegible] picnic baskets to a hungry bear."), David decided to give Sat[illegible] try. These days, we're happy to say, David wouldn't do bus[illegible]y other way, and ol' Wide Track is getting in some qual[illegible]me with his bone collection. (He doesn't mind. He was never much of a publicity hound [illegible] in the first place.)



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What's on your PowerBook?



Hannah Dean
English professor

Spring lectures
Syllabi for the academic year
Lesson plans
My grandchildren's Christmas lists
WordPerfect
Aldus Persuasion
Student grade records
A scene I wrote for my theater group
Research notes for my book
Outline for my book
The beginning chapter of my book
My husband's sketches
Overheads for a lecture
Minutes from our sailing club meeting
Calculations for the *Mal* '95 (my boat)
Navigation notes
Letters to candidates
Letters to my daughter
My entry in the annual Bad Hemingway contest

Lisa Wallen
Producer's assistant

Project plans
Storyboards
QuarkXPress
Shooting locations, February '93
Poems I'm working o
Shooting schedules
Shooting list
A movie treatment I'm writing
A cyberpunk novel on
A list of actors
Lists of crew, agency contacts, etc.
Salaries of actors, crew
QuickMail
Illustrations of cats
Production budgets
Master list of actors on video
Request for grant
My checkbook and buc
Notes from a poetry cl

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LETTERS

Sex with the Professor, Part II

Editor's Note: The September 1993 Forum, "New Rules About Sex on Campus: Should Professors Be Barred from Students' Beds?" provoked an unusual number of Letters to the Editor, as well as comment in other publications. Remarks by two of the Forum's participants, Joan Blythe, associate professor of English at the University of Kentucky, and William Kerrigan, professor of English at the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), drew most of the mail. A selection of readers' letters was published in this column in the November issue. Below, Professors Blythe and Kerrigan respond.

William Kerrigan:

I feel as if my remarks in the *Harper's* Forum have been interpreted by a nation of Iagos. Whether there should be bans on student-faculty sex is a complex and even embarrassing issue. I tried to address it honestly. In the course of the discussion, I mentioned "a particular kind of student I have responded to . . . a female student who . . . has unnaturally prolonged her virginity." Many newspapers and magazines reprinted this passage in a box, which appears to have sent a silent message: "Here, shorn of context, is a passage that can support some of yo ugliest fantasies. We in the press do give you many opportunities these da to hate Jews, African Americans, homosexuals, and when we do, it in somewhat disguised ways. But know you love to hate. Bid farewell generosity of spirit, ordinary goodw the benefit of doubt, and sink yo teeth into *this*." The result was a lo workout for a particular academ stereotype: the male sexual predat whose job provides him with an a nual supply of game. I expected bet from the readers of *Harper's*, a maybe I got it, since not all read write to the magazine. But the frigh fully overwrought and ungenerous l ters printed in the November issue a about the stereotype, and not abo me or what I was trying to say.

I am thought to have deflower many virgins, although "responded t does not mean "had sex with." I a said to have defined eighteen-year-o women as cases of unnaturally pr longed virginity. Why not suppose (was the case) that the women I r ferred to were much older and few number? Why not suppose (as was t case) that they were not enrolled in r courses at the time in question? W not suppose (as was the case) that *th themselves* defined their virginity unnaturally prolonged? A will to d tort rather than understand made n tional news of my remarks.

What did I trigger? What promp ed this display of moral panic?

Especially on sexual matters, t national mood is an edgy one just no

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Heterophobia—or, more accurately, [illegible] extricating campus sex from the appalling business of sexual harassment. [illegible] concern with harassment. As I expressly said, "I am not defending Don Juanism . . . sex for grades and so forth." [illegible] able to discuss sexuality apart from its vicious and illegal forms. Good things also happen; many professors are happily married to former students. The [illegible] linking campus sexuality with the no-fun-allowed subjects of violence and [illegible] and cannot picture (at least not for very long, and not with much clarity) any other kind of sexual possibility. [illegible] fear are wed.

Again and again my infamous remarks have evoked in commentators the image of a virginal eighteen-year-old woman. In the actual context of the Forum, we explicitly said that our [illegible] innocent creature, herself a stereotype, [illegible] ly did not have her in mind.

Yet this stereotypical young woman [illegible] conflicting set of national fantasies. Yesterday's child, she has just reached [illegible] and is thus available for the first time as a legal sexual partner. She has left home to go to college, where predators [illegible] situation. For the right wing, her virtues: she should love, marry, and have [illegible] the left wing, she is on the brink of victimization—that, sadly, is the default [illegible] violated innocence is used on campus [illegible] supply of political commitment. Although I was discussing something else, these are the tense American images, full of serious business, that my [illegible]

"Love refines/The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath its seat/In Reason, [illegible] to heavenly Love thou mayst ascend." [illegible] lessons professor Raphael teaches Eve [illegible] The em-paradised couple also learn that physical joining of earthly women and men and sexual union between angels are but variants of the joyful conversation of life, which takes many forms, including gardening, verbal exchanges, prayers to God, singing, and dancing.

In the same vein, some twenty-five years before he first published his epic, Milton argued that without "happy conversation" sex in marriage is but "savage brute necessity." This sentiment opposed Milton's views to [illegible] arguing that mental incompatibility was at least as valid a basis for divorce [illegible] demeaned marriage and especially women in marriage, Milton's opponents accused him (no doubt one of the most chaste poets in English history) of revolting sexual exploits. The majority of his detractors had not even read what he wrote.

Confronted by the November *Harper's* letters, I understand better than ever Milton's shocked frustration. [illegible] *Harper's* Forum, I, too, thought I was taking a stand for human dignity and for the charitable view that sexuality is not always just a predatory urge but rather something whose positive energies [illegible] human life: affection, compassion, poetry, humor, imagination, hard [illegible] November *Harper's* seem to have responded to little more than the red promo flap on the September issue's cover, "Sex 101: Should Profs and Coeds Be Barred from Bed? A Steamy Harper's Forum."

Now, let's set the record straight. [illegible] to New York on June 17 to discuss [illegible] to students' beds. That's the cesspool [illegible] Oprah, Donahue, and Geraldo. I went to discuss reasons why schools should not enact official bans against faculty [illegible] who wrote to the magazine, I, too, am outraged by profs who have sex with [illegible] classes and by students who peddle sex for grades. But determining guilt is [illegible] offenders in a smoke-free zone.

On one level, the *Harper's* letters [illegible] failure of American education to teach basic reading skills. But much more appalling was the writers' gloating hatred. The letters made me think of a image in Milton's "Lycidas": "The hungry sheep look up and are not fed/But swollen with wind, . . ./Rot inwardly and foul contagion spread." Our nation's gas attack of ignorance and mean-spirited self-righteousness [illegible] Tums-proof, and may be fatal to a [illegible] test in our people.

For example, it is the college professor who is overpaid, lazy, and immoral. Sad to say, although there are thousands of dismally salaried professors in our nation who faithfully teach four or five courses a semester, work long hours preparing classes and grading papers, and care about their students' presents and futures, there are those highly visible professors earning six-digit salaries who drive to campus in twelve-cylinder Jaguars to wage [illegible] Marxism before the selfish few. In their enthusiastic suspicion of language and condemnation of traditional cultural values, too many professors do forget that their students are starved for something to believe in. And what are students getting from an alarming number of our highest-paid and most crowd-goading professors? "Hate, hate, hate." Caught up in the red river of passionate outrage, students may well find it nearly impossible to distinguish intelligently between a compelling performance and words to live by. Remember, it is easy to hate (especially those you do not see face

NOTEBOOK

Robber barons redux

By Lewis H. Lapham

...here is more poetry in the whole transcontinental railroad train across the continent than all the gory story of the burning of Troy.
Joaquin Miller, 1884

At least twice a week for the last several months, the newspapers have been bringing word of yet another massive deal in progress among the gentlemanly media syndicates, and always the breathless tenor of the prose implies exclamation points—Murdoch Acquires Rights to Art! Viacom Bids $10 billion for Paramount! Pygmies Dance! Giants Walk the Earth! The stories invariably extol the wonders of the nation's new "information superhighway," and on reading the dispatches from New York and Los Angeles, I think of the furious building of railroads that excited the American imagination during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

The *New York Times* on October 12 published a front-page photograph of eight prominent media executives among them John C. Malone, president of Tele-Communications Inc., Sumner M. Redstone, chairman of Viacom, and Edward E. Whitacre Jr., chairman of Southwestern Bell Corporation; and Raymond W. Smith, chairman of Bell Atlantic) seated side by side behind a row of microphones in Washington, which they had come, a week after Mr. Smith's Bell Atlantic announced its intention to buy Mr. Malone's TCI for the sum of $33 billion, to assure the American people that the maneuver was in no way harmful to the public interest. But even as I admired their upright posture and the modesty of their dark and unassuming suits, I wondered how the political cartoonist Thomas Nast would have drawn their caricatures in the old *Harper's Weekly*. Certainly he would have furnished them with top hats and broad [illegible] Brooks Brothers [illegible] a general likeness [illegible] the chronic [illegible] allotment of [illegible] some color in the engraving instead of the customary [illegible] ming in ink), Nast undoubtedly would have placed the ragged figure of Liberty under the conference table, a sorely [illegible] on whom the fine gentlemen rested their dainty [illegible]

But Nast [illegible] with Teddy Roosevelt [illegible] and "money" [illegible] applied to the board game. The *Times* preferred the word "[illegible]" stressed the feats of miraculous deliverance [illegible] clean, well-lighted rooms of technological advancement. [illegible] presentation [illegible] the gentlemen seated at the microphone, who presented themselves [illegible] violent dynamism and wholesome change. Not unexpectedly, they were [illegible] any interference from the government [illegible] the [illegible] the [illegible] John Sculley, [illegible] chairman of Apple [illegible] closed-door [illegible] announced [illegible] possible for regulators to move as quickly [illegible] social Darwinism [illegible]

All present at the conference table [illegible] of MCI Communications. "All too often," he said, "what we have seen is the [illegible] secretary of commerce, glistened with the [illegible] happy to be of service, glad to bring the important guests from the media syndicates another pheasant or tax exemption. [illegible] Award. "[illegible] my mind is not whether companies are [illegible] petitive, and forward-looking."

Over the [illegible] the communications [illegible] government [illegible] the [illegible] dictates [illegible] endorsements of free trade and free enterprise [illegible] Intel, Compaq, Oracle, and [illegible] the [illegible] the interests of a very small number of [illegible] monopoly—present, past, and future. [illegible] the interests of [illegible] seated at the extreme left of the photograph [illegible] doubtedly would have drawn with the [illegible] greed.

(roughly 20 percent of the American
ests in Turner Broadcasting, Teleport
Communications, TeleWest (a com-
bined television and telephone com-
pany in England), and the Discovery
Channel. An ancillary company, Lib-
erty Media, also tendered by Mr. Mal-
one to Mr. Smith, holds lesser but still
extensive interests in Black Entertain-
ment Television, QVC, Home Shop-
ping Network, Courtroom Television
Jukebox. Bell Atlantic presently pro-
vides telephone service (land line and
cellular) to 13 million customers in
rubric, Bell Atlantic, TCI, and Liberty
capacities of a telephone company.
Sending its signals through a single
wire, the new company must neces-
sarily occupy the attention of 22 mil-
lion subscribers in all of the country's
one hundred principal markets, pro-
viding them with television programs,
telephone conversations, old movies,
sexual fantasies, bank statements, in-
teractive games, doctors' prescriptions,
and merchandising orders.
arranging the deal with Bell Atlantic
last summer, he also was seeking a sub-
stantial interest in Paramount Com-
that owns, in addition to a major
movie studio, a large film library, the
studio's network television program-
ming, a portfolio of syndicated situa-
large publishing apparatus (chiefly Si-
mon & Schuster and Prentice Hall),
Madison Square Garden, the New
York Rangers, and the New York
Knicks. In this second theater of merg-
interest with Barry Diller's QVC, with
dom House Books and the Condé

The attractions of Paramount al-
ready had become apparent to Via-
com, another of the country's large
media combinations (owning, among
other assets, nineteen broadcast sta-
tions, 11 million cable boxes, MTV,
Nickelodeon, and Showtime), and
throughout the late summer and ear-
ly autumn Viacom and QVC offered
increasingly extravagant bids for what
the newspapers liked to call "the last
studio in play." As Diller assembled
allies for QVC, Sumner Redstone, the
chairman of Viacom, did likewise, re-
plenishing his own cash reserves with
those of Nynex, a regional telephone
company, and the Blockbuster Enter-
tainment Corporation. By November
7 the increasingly acrimonious auc-
tion put the price of Paramount at
$10.1 billion (offered by Viacom) or
$9.5 billion (offered by QVC).

The financial press made no attempt
to quiet its emotions, and always the
stories were touched with the bloom of
awe. Behold, dear reader, men of genius
and resolve—Billionaires! Visionar-
ies! Entrepreneurs!—trading cable sys-
tems for telephone lines, and telephone
lines for movie studios, and movie stu-
dios for cable systems—buying and
selling the fonts of celebrity like fur-
longs of railroad track, risking the haz-
ard of new fortunes for the good of the
nation. Most of the same tributes and
many of the same adjectives decorat-
ed the public effigies of Commodore
Vanderbilt, J. P. Morgan, and John D.
Rockefeller at the zenith of the Gild-
ed Age. The newspapers of the day
published ribbons and streamers of
praise, and respectful crowds gathered
in Grand Central Terminal to watch
the lords of industrial creation depart
in their private railroad cars for Chica-
go and Cheyenne. The historian Page
Smith summed up the prevalent en-
locomotive aroused the deepest emo-
tions of which Americans were capa-
ble—awe at its power, at the thrust of
its great wheels, the clouds of trailing
smoke, the tolling bell, the eerie whis-
tle born mournfully on the wind (the
greed at the wealth it promised; rage at
its dictatorial and unpredictable ways
and at the corruption that followed it
everywhere like a dark cloud. All th
was best and worst in America seem
caught up in the railroad dementia.
railroads promoted an outlay of mo
Henry Adams thought suf
cient "to bankrupt the world," ar
ican business invested $1 trillion
the myriad forms of information tec
nology, chasing the myriad dreams
limitless freedom and infinite wealt
As was true of nineteenth-century in
perialism, some of the dreams we
more vicious than others, and not all
them were about the promise of th
soul's oasis lying just over the horiz
and beyond the next line of cotto
wood trees. Malone expressed the f
miliar hope of commercial domini
on the afternoon that he announce
the deal joining the interests of TC
with those of Bell Atlantic. Projec
ing the vision of a single box on top
every television set in America, a b
attached to one wire directing the flo
of every conceivable form of inform
tion, Malone said, "It will allow us
control all the communications nee
of a household with one device."

The words "us" and "control" allie
Malone with Commodore Vanderbi
and John D. Rockefeller, both of who
knew that the rules of finance cap
tween the triumphant few (us) ar
the hapless many (them), and that th
absolute command of the means
transportation. Malone apparently re
licates their talent for despotism
When the Federal Trade Commissio
dia to withdraw from the QVC offer f
Paramount—because its explicit co
tempt for the antitrust laws was t
flagrant even for the Clinton Admi
Malone in preliminary discussions wit
Matsushita Electric (in the hope
buying an interest in MCA) as we
as with the Sony Corporation (in th
hope of buying an interest in Columb
Pictures). People who know him spe
of his arrogance and impatience, of "
bully boy," "an unscrupulous mono
olist," and "a guy who knows how
run over people." On being pressed
Time magazine for a reply to the cha
acterization, Malone said, "Whe

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and broadcast their own dissenting opinions, or do they become gratefu consumers of the authorized texts man ufactured by six or seven media syndi cates (Time Warner, Murdoch's News Walt Disney Co., Bell Atlantic, Ber telsmann) that own both the mean of production and the systems of dis tribution? In brief and in sum, does the new information order become an oper

All the questions touch on the demo enterprise, but none of them is likely t engender a public debate. Allied with the commercial ambitions that it sup posedly restrains, the government wil do what is necessary to muffle the po litical argument, and the press, daze by the wonders of technology and the splendor of money, will provide the cues for sustained applause. Among the relatively few people apt to make an objection, nobody speaks more elo quently in favor of an open system than Mitchell Kapor, who resigned the chairmanship of Lotus to set up the Electronic Frontier Foundation. The foundation promotes the hope o cheap, easy, and equal access to a da ta highway constructed along the line work of 1.3 million computers in forty countries that allows roughly 30 mil lion people to talk to one another, reac E-mail, post messages, download text (from the Library of Congress as wel as from most university libraries), play chess, conduct symposia, organize po litical rallies, tell jokes—all withou having to pay tolls, receive authoriza tion, submit a financial statement, o prove that they don't smoke.

hand as a variant of the early-nine teenth-century argument betwee Thomas Jefferson and the Federal ists about the disposition of the west ern frontier, and in an essay publishe last summer in *Wired*, he propose the Internet as a model of the demo cratic Eden, a public space held i common between two or more linke computers in which individuals migh communicate with one another with out fear of embarrassment or censure Just as Jefferson defined the owner ship of land as "a natural right" tha guaranteed the prosperity and self

tance of the American farmer, K
r defines access to information a
natural right concerning the same
ons on any American citizen pos
ssed of a computer, a modem, and
password. Proposing the image and
alogy of a bountiful wilderness, K
r wrote, "Life in Cyberspace is of
n conducted in primitive, frontier
nditions. But at its best, it is more
alitarian than elitist, more decen-
alized than hierarchical. It serves
dividuals and communities, not
ss audiences."

By temperament nonconformist and
ticorporate, Kapor worked briefly as
disc jockey and stand-up comic be-
re stumbling across the computer
ades, and on reading his essay I
ought of the fur trappers in the
ocky Mountains in the late 1830s al-
ady beginning to notice that the
gh country was becoming as crowd-
as Ohio and looking with suspicion
the first wagon trains toiling west
ross the Great Plains. Like the car-
hackers in Cyberspace, the moun-
in men delighted in the beauty and
angeness of a new land, and they
ere loath to see it sold in sections
nvenient to the grazing of sheep.

The history of American finance
esn't follow the course of their ro-
anticism and courage. When Jeffer-
n signed the Louisiana Purchase he
ought that it would need at least
e hundred years to settle the frontier,
d through the first half of the nine-
enth century the adventurous spirit
the new American nation showed it-
lf most characteristically in the deeds
d exploits of the wayward individu-
—the fur trader, the prospector, the
oneer, the man or woman looking
take a chance on a play of the light
a scent in the wind. By 1850 the
ountain men had been reduced to
rving as scouts for the immigrant
ravans (not unlike the hackers now
oked to the harness of MicroSoft and
M), and in the latter half of the cen-
ry the triumphs were those of the
rporation—the mining company,
e railroad monopoly, the land trust,
e stockholders looking for a safe bet
d a sure thing.

The story of the great American
rtunes is largely the story of well-ar-
nged monopolies—in commodities
various as sugar and tin and football

[redacted]

pipelines. Jefferson died bankrupt, and
the fur trade became [redacted]
opoly operated by [redacted]
of the Missouri River [redacted]
tor, of John Jacob Astor [redacted]
ame in 1840 the trade [redacted]
to the west already [redacted]
prices of coffee and nails at twenty
times their cost in St. Louis or Santa
Fe. By 1880 most of the land opened
for settlement under the Homestead
Act had been acquired by speculators
or distant corporations (many of them
owned by British capital), and the rail-
road builders at work in the later years
of the century measured the value of
wayward individuals at the prices paid
for the shipment of their coffins.

Although I can share Kapor's hope
for a sweeter, greener world, I don't
find much reason to believe that the
latter-day princes of the fourth estate
will act any differently from their nine-
teenth-century forebears. They dream
of cornering a market of the [redacted]
diences available to cable, not of free
individuals speaking to one another
on the Internet. Nor do I expect the
government to advance the hope of
democracy over the interests of oli-
garchy. Despite the rebuke offered to
Malone and Liberty Media for at-
tempting an interest in both Bell At-
lantic and Paramount, the trend in
Washington supports the principle of
enriching the few at the expense of
the many. Representative Boucher al-
ready has proposed legislation to tran-
sform the management of the Internet
to corporate interests, and the Clinton
Administration has proposed selling
to private owners frequencies in the
public-radio spectrum. What, after all,
would the government want with a
forum in which a significant number of
literate citizens might organize their
politics in a manner unflattering to
the status quo?

Toward the end of his essay, Kapor
hedged his fear of monopolies with
the reassuring [redacted] and even the
most dim-witted businessmen surely
must see the only virtue of an open
system, must see how the freedom of
mind leads, inevitably, to bigger mar-
kets and greater [redacted]. His faith in
the tools serves [redacted] the humane
compassion [redacted] typical Ameri-

[redacted]

fans like scythes moving through
[redacted]

[redacted]
stock, and the promoters of the current
media speculations don't even enjoy
[redacted]
[redacted]
hope [redacted]
would bear or watch their produce rot
[redacted]
est middleman, but the market in im-
ages isn't as certain as the market in
[redacted]
[redacted]
ty doesn't guarantee a community of
intellectual or spiritual interest. Who
can guess what they'll pay to watch?
The question is one that cable opera-
tors tend to obscure, answering it
whenever possible with a good deal
of talk about the wonders of the new
technology and the benefits of free
connections to the necessary politi-
cians. What distinguished the nine-
teenth century was the breakneck
speed of technological change. It took
only twelve years to exhaust the fur
trade, the heyday of the Mississippi
steamboat lasted [redacted]
the moment [redacted]
coach between St. Louis and San Fran-
cisco, fewer than five. The pony
express came and went in the space of
eleven months.

Everything was over [redacted] almost
before anybody knew what to look for
or why they had come so far. By the
end of the century it was understood
that the capture of the American West
had ended in both victory and defeat.
Victory for the public parks and banks
commerce that so efficiently turned so
many things into property. Defeat for
the private expeditions that went in
search of the soul's oasis. What re-
mained [redacted]
dreaming optimism of the American
[redacted]
wish to believe [redacted]



GRANDSCAPE.

HARPER'S INDEX

Chances that a job created [illegible] : [illegible]

Number of America's ten largest industrial [illegible] : [illegible]

Amount IBM will spend [illegible] : [illegible]

Amount Miller Brewing spends each year to promote its Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund : $300,00

Amount it spent [illegible] : [illegible]

Amount the Miami tourist bureau will [illegible] : [illegible]

Number of fire bombings in Sacramento, California, [illegible] : [illegible]

Chances that a Korean-owned business [illegible] : [illegible]

Percentage of all immigrants to the United States [illegible] : [illegible]

Rank of Ecuadorans, Italians, and Poles, among the largest illegal immigrant groups in New York State : 1, 2, 3

Ratio of the number of New York City cabbies killed [illegible] : [illegible]

Percentage of Americans who [illegible] : [illegible]

Chances that an African lives outside of his or her country of birth : 1 in 18

Number of Kuwaiti human-rights groups permanently banned last August by the Kuwaiti government : 6

Ratio of the number of refugees from the former East Germany : [illegible]

Chances that a Briton would move to another country "if free to do so" : 1 in 2

Percentage of Russians who believe their country will become more democratic in the next few years : [illegible]

Ratio of Russians with a favorable opinion of Stalin today to those with a favorable opinion of Gorbachev : [illegible]

Average number of times per week last year that Lenin's corpse was washed : 2

Contributions made last year to the Sam Donaldson Hairpiece Replacement Fund : $90

Reward the town of Burns, Oregon, is offering anyone who can [illegible] : [illegible]

Chances that hospital care will save the life of a heart-attack victim who does not respond to [illegible] : 1 in [illegible]

Amount spent each year on emergency hospital care for non-responsive heart-attack victims : $500,000,000

Monthly fee charged by Courtscan, a Philadelphia company providing physicians with patients' litigation records : $79.95

Estimated portion of the price of an eight-foot stepladder accounted for by litigation costs and insurance : 1/5

Average percentage markup on an "economy" casket sold by a U.S. funeral home : 300

Rank of January, among months in which the [illegible] : 1

Ratio of January sales of health-club memberships to average monthly sales during the rest of the year : 3:2

Price of a [illegible] : [illegible]

Profits earned last year by two men selling used girls' underpants from vending machines in Japan : $96,000

Ratio of copies of *The Age of Innocence* sold in [illegible] : 6:1

Rank of *Ivanhoe* among the [illegible] : 1

Percentage change, since 1991, in the [illegible] : [illegible]

Hours the average Chinese worker must work to earn the price of an ice-cream cone at Beijing's new Baskin-Robbins : 7

Cups of iceberg lettuce one must consume in order to satisfy the minimum daily requirement of any vitamin : 27.5

Cups of spinach one must consume in order to satisfy the minimum daily requirement of any vitamin : 1.3

Rounds it took 16-year-old Dallas Malloy to win the first official women's amateur boxing match, held last fall : 3

Extra points kicked by a Virginia high school football player last fall after being elected Homecoming Queen at halftime : 3

Chances that a member of the Hempstead, Texas, high school cheerleading squad was pregnant last fall : 1 in 4

Figures at Last (Lutz & Co.)

Dave

If Annual Fees And Sales Charges Are Chipping Away At Your IRA...

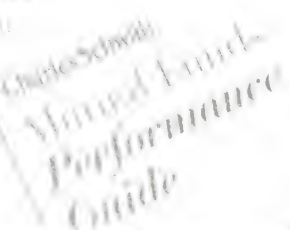


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[illegible] Please read carefully before investing. Some funds may charge 12b-1 fees in excess of 0.25 Available funds may change and fees may be reinstated. Other restrictions apply. Contact a [illegible]

READINGS

[Essay]

SECOND THOUGHTS ON ARAFAT'S DEAL

From "The Morning After" by Edward Said in the October 21, 1993, issue of The London Review of Books. *Said is University Professor at Columbia University and a former member of the Palestine National Council. His most recent book is* Culture and Imperialism. *His essay "Palestine: Memory of Hope and Nowhere" appeared in the December 1992 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

Now that some of the euphoria has lifted, it is possible to re-examine the Israeli-PLO agreement with the required common sense. What emerges from such scrutiny is a deal that is more flawed and, for most of the Palestinian people, more unfavorably weighted than many had first supposed. The fashion-show vulgarities of the White House ceremony, the degrading spectacle of Yasir Arafat thanking everyone for the suspension of most of his people's rights, and the lugubrious solemnity of Bill Clinton's performance like a twentieth-century Roman emperor shepherding two vassal kings through rituals of reconciliation and observance—all these only temporarily obscure the truly astonishing proportions of the Palestinian capitulation.

So first of all, let us call the agreement by its real name: an instrument of Palestinian surrender, a Palestinian Versailles. The fact is, as former Secretary of State James Baker said in a TV interview, Israel has conceded nothing except the existence of "the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people." By contrast, Arafat's recognition of Israel's right to exist carries with it a whole series of renunciations of the PLO's charter; of violence and terrorism; of all relevant U.N. resolutions except 242 and 338, which do not have one word in them about the Palestinians, their rights, or their aspirations. In addition, by implication, the PLO set aside numerous other resolutions passed by the European Community, the non-aligned movement, the Islamic Conference, and the Arab League, as well as by the U.N. that have given Palestinian refugee rights, including either compensation or repatriation, and have disallowed or censured Israeli settlements, annexations, and crimes against the people under occupation.

Neither Arafat nor any of his Palestinian partners who met the Israelis in Oslo has ever objected to an Israeli settlement. There are now more than two hundred of them, principally on hills, promontories, and strategic points throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Many will probably shrivel and die, but the largest are designed for permanence. The areas [illegible] by the settlements, plus the land designated for future settlement, amount to [illegible] of the total land area of the Occupied Territories. In addition, Israel has tapped into every aquifer on the West Bank and now uses about 80 percent of the water [illegible] settlements and for Israel proper. So Israeli domination (if not the outright theft) of land and water resources is either overlooked (in the case of water) or postponed (in the case of land) by the Oslo accord.

The Israeli calculation [illegible] that by bringing the PLO [illegible] Peres tried to give Sadat fifteen years ago—the organization would soon fall afoul of local competitors, of whom Hamas is only one. As a result, rather than becoming stronger during the interim period, the Palestinians may grow weaker, finding themselves increasingly under the thumb of Israel and [illegible] Israeli claim when the last set of negotiations be-

ry will move from an interim status to a later one, the document is purposefully silent. Per- the final one.

on the White House lawn, Yasir Arafat was tak-

BOSNIA: THE CASE FOR EMPIRE

From "Notes on the Ottoman Legacy," by David Rieff, in issue No. 7 of Subjective Reasoning, *a quarterly published by Champion International Corporation in Stamford, Connecticut. Rieff is a con- Harper's Magazine. His essay "Multiculturalism's Silent Partner" appeared in the August 1993 issue.*

As the world flounders in tribalism, those great multicultural empires the Ottoman and the Hapsburg look better and better. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was nationalism, even nationalism based on ethnicity or creed, that looked modern, and these great, inefficient behemoths seemed not only destined for extinc- tate. Who at the time would have sided with the like Kossuth or Masaryk, or with Sultan Abdul Hamid against the Balkan insurgents who confronted him? But the question must be posed again, as events in Sarajevo close the century that events in Sarajevo opened. And, in retrospect, it may seem that for all its ferocities it was the Ottoman vision and not the nationalist one that holds up better. We shall be polyglot in the next century or we shall kill one another off. Europe has demonstrated in the Bosnian war that it is not yet that supranational society many be- there is no Europe in reality, only a congeries of European states, as there has been for more than five hundred years. So perhaps it is time, however improbable the thought may at first appear, to turn a kinder eye on the Ottomans. We must not be romantic and aspire to be Turks again. But Europe's failure in Bosnia—and, by extension, America's—should lead us to cast a colder eye upon ourselves and upon our own pretensions to civilization. The dying children of Sarajevo deserve at least that much.

—— its fact unattractive and morally repellent man on earth. Whenever he appeared in the media or was discussed by them, he was presented as if he had only one thought in his head: killing Jews, especially innocent women and children. But within a matter of days of the peace agreement, the "independent" media had totally rehabilitated Arafat. He was now an accepted, even lovable figure whose courage and realism had bestowed on Israel its rightful due. He had repented, he had become a "friend," and he and his people were now on "our" side. Anyone who opposed or criticized his role in the agreement was either a fundamentalist, like the Likud settlers, or a terrorist, like the members of Hamas. It became nearly impossible to voice any opinion other than that the Israeli-Palestinian agreement—mostly unread or unexamined, and in any case unclear, lacking dozens of crucial details—was the first step toward Palestinian independence.

I find it especially disheartening that so many Arab and Palestinian intellectuals, who a week earlier had been moaning and groaning about Arafat's dictatorial ways, his single-minded control over the organization's money, his insular circle of sycophants and courtiers, and his lack of accountability and reflection, at least since the Gulf War, should suddenly make a 180-degree turn and start applauding the leader's tactical genius.

The Palestinians should be capable of seeing that the large majority of people the PLO is supposed to represent will not really be served by the agreement, except cosmetically. True, residents of the West Bank and Gaza are, rightly, glad to see that some Israeli troops will withdraw and that large sums of money might be forthcoming. But it is rank dishonesty to deny what the agreement entails in terms of further occupation, economic control, and profound insecurity. In addition, there is the mammoth problem of the Palestinians who live in Jordan, to say nothing of the thousands of stateless refugees in Lebanon and Syria. Although this issue has been deferred until the final status talks sometime in the future, it needs to be brought up now. The Lebanese government, for instance, has been publicly heating up the rhetoric against granting citizenship and naturalization for the 350,000 to 400,000 Palestinians in Lebanon, most of whom are stateless, poor, permanently stalled. A similar situation exists in Jordan and Egypt. These people, who have paid the heaviest price of all Palestinians, can neither be left to rot nor dumped somewhere else against their will. Israel is able to offer the right of return to every Jew in the world, but the agreement says nothing about the right of these Palestinians to return. This extraordinary inequity, intolerable to all Palestinians for almost half a century, has to be rectified. These diaspora Pales-



"L'Adieu: Pearls Before Gods," by Regina Frank, an installation on exhibit last fall at The New Museum of Contemporary Art, in New York City. For twenty-eight days, Frank sewed pearls onto a silk gown in the museum's street window; each day she was paid the average wage of a seamstress in a different country. The installation was part of Trade Routes, *an exhibition of work by international artists who focus on global trade relations. Frank lives in Berlin.*

tinians comprise at least half of the total Palestinian population, and their needs and aspirations are not negligible. It is this group that originally brought Arafat and the PLO to power, kept them there, and now are relegated to permanent exile or refugee status.

After all the hoopla celebrating "the first step toward a Palestinian state," we should remind ourselves that much more important than simply having a state is the kind of state it is. The history of the post-colonial world is disfigured by one-party tyrannies, rapacious oligarchies, social dislocation caused by Western "investments," and large-scale pauperization brought about by famine, civil war, or outright robbery. Nationalism, like religious fundamentalism, can never be "the answer" to the problems of new secular societies.

Several Israeli commentators have been suggesting that within, say, six months, the PLO and Rabin's government will negotiate a new agreement that would further postpone elections called for in the accord and thereby allow the PLO to continue to rule. It is worth mentioning that at least twice during the past summer Arafat said that his experience of governing consisted of the ten years during which he "controlled" Lebanon, hardly a comfort to the many Lebanese and Palestinians who recollect that sorry period. Nor is there at present any concrete way for elections to be held should they even be scheduled. The imposition of rule from above plus the long legacy of the occupation have not contributed much to the growth of democratic, grass-roots institutions. Will there ever be truly representative institutions? One cannot be very sanguine, given Arafat's absolute refusal to share or delegate power, to say nothing of the financial assets he alone knows about and controls.

Like so many unpopular and undemocratic Arab governments, the PLO has already begun to appropriate authority for itself by calling its opponents "terrorists" and "fundamentalists." This is demagoguery. Hamas and Islamic Jihad are opposed to the Oslo agreement, but they have said several times that they will not embark on anything approaching a Palestinian civil war. Opposition to the PLO, however, goes beyond these groups. It also includes well-known secularists, people who are committed to a peaceful solution to the Palestinian–Israeli conflict, realists, and democrats. I include myself in this group, which is, I believe, far bigger than is now supposed.

As far as the truly independent critic or analyst is concerned, the problem is how to free oneself from the ideological system that both the agreement and the media now serve. What

symbolize a great moment of success but also to blot out past as well as present realities. Yet it is patently obvious that Palestinian freedom in any real sense has not been achieved and is clearly designed not to be, beyond the meager limits imposed by Israel and the United States.

[Booklet]

SAY A LITTLE PRAYER FOR BILL



the commission member who conceived the booklet, told a

I didn't vote for Clinton, but I'm an American, he's our leaders." So far, the commission has distributed more than

[Test]

MULTIPLE-CHOICE HUMAN RIGHTS

From "Practical Training Questions," a multiple-choice test given to Latin American soldiers and officers at the U.S. Army's School of the Americas, at Fort Benning in Georgia. Since 1946 the school has trained more than 56,000 Latin Americans in combat and counterinsurgency techniques as part of a program to promote "military professionalism" in the region. The school has often been criticized, however, for training officers who later have been accused of human-rights abuses; graduates include Manuel Noriega, Salvadoran officers implicated by the U.N. Truth Commission report in the killings of six Jesuit priests in 1989, and numerous Colombian, Honduran, and Peruvian officers accused of rights violations. In 1991 the school established four hours of "mandatory human-rights awareness training," of which the test below is a part. The questions appeared in the premiere issue of Counterpunch, *a Washington-based newsletter sponsored by the Institute for Policy Studies. Translated from the Spanish by Jennifer Barton.*

1. A member of your squad informs you that the enemy is using a building as a military hospital. The hospital is not marked with a red cross. You should:

a. Attack the building because it isn't marked with a protective emblem.

b. Attack the building because it is a military hospital.

c. Capture the hospital and its staff.

2. Your squad has in its custody three civilians, one of whom is a guerrilla soldier. Yesterday the enemy murdered one of the members of your squad who had been captured. Another member of your unit wants to kill one of the civilians to settle the score. The correct action is:

a. Execute the guerrilla in retaliation.

b. Do not execute anyone, but hold the three civilians as hostages until the enemy stops killing prisoners of war.

c. Protect the civilians and do not injure any of them.

3. After an intense battle, your unit occupies an enemy town. Though the town is fairly secure, some of its residents have taken part in night-time attacks against your forces. What should you do?

a. Take the mayor hostage until the attacks end.

b. Destroy the attackers' homes in retaliation.

c. Establish an after-dark curfew and punish whomever violates it.

d. Make the town pay a large fine.





The stills above are taken from a videotape shown last October at a press conference held by the UNABOM Task Force, a joint operation of the FBI, the U.S. Postal Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms that is investigating the "Unabom" mail bombings, a series of fourteen attacks that have occurred since 1978. Most of the mail bombings have been directed at scientists and professors; last June a geneticist at the University of California at San Francisco and a computer scientist at Yale University were seriously injured in separate mail-bomb incidents. According to Kenneth J. Hunger, the chief postal inspector, the video was made to give "an idea of the impact the doctors endured when they opened the package.

4. After many days of intense fighting and heavy losses, your squad has captured enemy soldiers. The leader of the squad orders you to "take care of the prisoners." You should:

a. Comply with the order and kill the prisoners.

b. Do not act, since it is not clear what the leader wants.

c. Ask your squad leader to explain his order.

d. Carry out the order but denounce the squad leader.

5. You observe your squad leader taking a prisoner of war off a path toward the underbrush. You hear a shot from an M-16 rifle. A moment later the squad leader returns to the patrol. He tells you that the prisoner was "shot trying to escape." What should you do?

a. Nothing.

b. Speak to your squad leader about his conduct.

c. Denounce the incident.

d. Ordinarily, you should denounce a "serious violation," but this is not a "serious violation" because the prisoner was a soldier.

6. The squad leader gives an order to cut off the ears of dead enemy soldiers as proof of the number of casualties. You should:

a. Obey the order but denounce it to your superiors.

b. Obey the order.

c. Disobey the order and tell your superiors about the incident.

d. Order a squad member of lower rank to obey the order.

7. Your squad overtakes a convoy of enemy ambulances. Suddenly, the enemy opens fire on your squad from the ambulances. After the battle, you discover that the enemy is using the vehicles to transport ammunition. What should you do?

a. Begin to use ambulances to transport ammunition, since the enemy did it first.

b. Denounce this violation of the laws of war.

c. You do not need to denounce it because it is an enemy violation.

d. Fire on all enemy medical units because they have misused their [illegible].

8. One of the captured soldiers, whom you know has valuable information, refuses to give more than his name, rank, service number, and date of birth. You should:

a. Threaten him with physical injury, without really hurting him.

b. Threaten him with physical injury and, if necessary, inflict minor wounds.

c. Neither threaten nor hurt him.

[Letters to the Editor]

CASUALTIES OF LAW

From a letter by David V. Jackson, the senior workers' compensation judge in Kansas, that appeared in the March 20, 1993, Wichita Eagle. Jackson was writing in response to a series of news articles about workers' compensation claims filed by officials involved with the Kansas workers' compensation system. The former state insurance commissioner, for example, was granted $94,496 after he injured his back lifting his briefcase from the trunk of his car; a former state director of workers' compensation received $30,000 for injuring his back reaching for a statute book; and a third, Michael Harris, a state senator working on the reform of the workers' compensation system, was awarded $34,864 when he injured his shoulder reaching into the backseat of his car for his briefcase.

As the senior workers' compensation judge in Wichita, I am beginning to view the workers' compensation reporting by the *Wichita Eagle* with increasing dismay. Workers' compensation lawyers are not thieves, or cheats, or exploiters. They are simply aware of workers' compensation law, which covers them every bit as much as it does the worker.

I am well familiar with the integrity and honesty of Senator Mike Harris and Mr. Steve Wilson [an attorney who is a workers' compensation lawyer who was awarded compensation for an on-the-job injury]. As a factual matter, Mr. Wilson sustained his back injury in workers' compensation court! He had to be removed on a stretcher. It was witnessed by the attorneys and the judges. As for Senator Harris, his injury was from lifting his briefcase. He tore his shoulder out. He needed surgery.

[illegible] clever insinuations against Mr. Harris and Mr. Wilson in the articles. The *Eagle* calls for a closing of loopholes in workers' compensation laws.

To every worker I say: if Senator Harris cannot claim benefits for a shoulder injury when lifting a ten- to twenty-pound briefcase, then you, Mr. or Ms. Worker, will not be able to claim benefits for a shoulder injury when you lift a ten- or twenty-pound part at the factory.

And when I tell Mr. Wilson I think he's taking when he is carried out of my courtroom on a stretcher in disabling pain, I will also tell you, Mr. or Ms. Worker, that your ambulance ride was mere pretense as well.

To suggest that the injuries suffered by Mr. Wilson and Senator Harris, or their claiming of their rights under the law, make them suspect of anything is sheer nonsense.

[Manual]

A FINAL EXIT FOR JAPAN'S GENERATION X

From The Complete Manual of Suicide, *by Wataru Tsurumi, published last summer by the Ohta Publishing Company, in Tokyo. In his prologue, Tsurumi explains that he wrote the book because "there's no real reason not to commit suicide…it doesn't matter if you live or die." Since its publication, the book has sold more than 200,000 copies, mostly to people under thirty; Tsurumi, who is twenty-nine, writes that his generation was "born at the wrong time." Translated for* Harper's Magazine *by Shinji Yokoi.*

I wrote this book for a simple reason: too many people have been brainwashed into believing that suicide is wrong. In elementary school, teachers make their students write essays on "the importance of life" and say that people who commit suicide are cowardly or weak-willed. Others offer clichés—"life is precious," "your family and friends will be hurt deeply"—but these are merely platitudes.

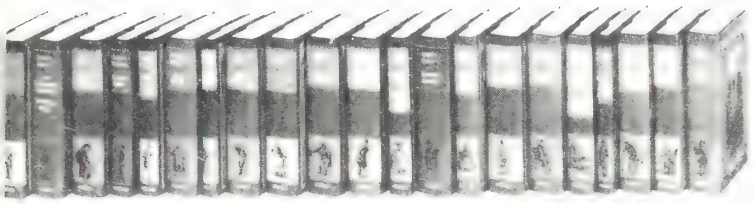
The truth is, life is dull and repetitive. As Yukio Mishima wrote in *Confessions of a Mask*, "Everyday life is more dreadful than war." By doing the same thing over and over, we slowly lose the feeling of being truly alive. Eventually, we can't even tell if we are alive or dead.

Your life probably follows the conventional path. You go to elementary school in your hometown, learn the lists of historical figures, memorize your English words. You study hard after [illegible] that you can get into the right high school, and then the right college. After spending four pointless years in college, you join a corporation. If you are a man, you marry in your late twenties and have a kid the next year. You get promoted or transferred a few times, maybe even become a manager. When you turn sixty, you retire and spend the last ten or twenty years of your life enjoying something or other. Then you die. There are no true happy endings like you see on television. Nothing we do will change any of this; we are all powerless. What is the point of life?

For a while, it seemed like it would end, all of it. In the late Eighties, there was a feeling of doom in the air. The most popular rock band in the country sang about Chernobyl. Girls who believed in reincarnation began to search for their mates in anticipation of Armageddon. Even children talked of death. People would say, "The big one may be coming!" or "The world may end tomorrow!"

But the world never ended. No nuclear pow-

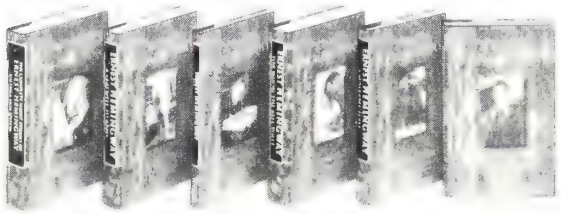
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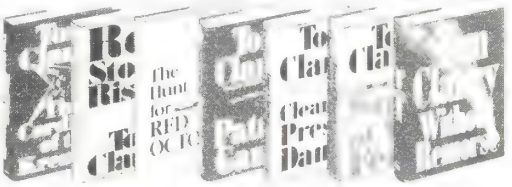
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[Interview]

DO NOT GO GENTLE INTO THAT PINK GRAVEL

From an interview with Jesse Rainer, a resident of Portsmouth, England, aired last summer on As It Happens, *a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation radio program. The interview was conducted by the show's host, Linden MacIntyre. The exchange below appeared in the November/December 1993 issue of* Health *magazine.*

MACINTYRE: Tell me what happened to your goldfish.

RAINER: Well, when I went to clean the bowl, I noticed that Grumpy—he's named Grumpy—was lying on his side at the bottom of the bowl. I thought straightaway that he was dead. Done for. His gills were motionless, his fins were barely moving. He wasn't breathing. And I thought immediately that I wanted him to live, because I have another goldfish, and if Grumpy had died he'd have grieved.

MACINTYRE: And what did you do then?

RAINER: On the spur of the moment, I simply thought of giving him the kiss of life. I took him out of the bowl gently, in the palm of my hand. And with his face facing mine, I blew gently into his mouth a couple of times and gently squeezed my fingers to get the heart motion going again. Then I put him on his own in a bowl, and put him under the cold-water tap and let it run. And the buoyancy of the water plus half a shilling's worth and [illegible] well, within three-quarters of an hour, he was back to life and swimming around again.

MACINTYRE: Where did you learn to do this?

RAINER: Nowhere. Just suddenly it came to me.

MACINTYRE: Have you ever given the kiss of life before?

RAINER: No, never. To nothing—no animal, human, or nothing. It's something I had to do, and I just got on and done it.

MACINTYRE: How has he been since his near-[illegible]?

RAINER: Oh, he's as lively as a cricket, chasing the other fish all over the bowl.

[illegible] He thinks I love him.

RAINER: In a way, yes. Before, he was not very friendly. Every time I went near the bowl, he'd go [illegible].

MACINTYRE: And all that's changed now?

RAINER: All that's changed.

er plant blew up. The dream of all-out nuclear war faded. And, like the revolutionaries of the late Sixties, the bystanders of the Eighties gave up. Let's face it: the "big one" isn't coming. There will be no Armageddon. If you really want the world to end, you're going to have to do it yourself.

I do not mean to incite people to kill themselves, but people need to know that there is an alternative. If you're bored, if you're sick of school or work, you have another option. If you want to live, fine—live as you please. And if you want to die, that's fine, too—go ahead and commit suicide. Nobody can stop you.

Jumping in front of a train

Choose a local station where an express train passes without stopping—a slow train may not be lethal. If you jump when an approaching train is about 100 meters away, it will be too late for the train to stop and too late for anyone to try to rescue you. Jump down onto the tracks, lie across them, and wait for the train to hit you.

Parts of your body—your arms, legs, and stomach—will be cut off on impact. You will probably die instantly. If some of your clothes get tangled under the train, you may be dragged for a while. Various parts of your body will be scattered over several hundred meters.

Freezing

Letting yourself freeze to death seems to be as pleasurable as hanging or jumping from a building. You need to have guts to do this, but the process is almost painless. Your body typically does not suffer major damage.

Make sure to keep an eye on the weather forecast and choose a very cold night. You need to prepare your body so that you will freeze quickly. Take off all your clothes, wet your body with cold water, turn on an air conditioner or fan, and open every window in the house. You should be hungry and tired. To accelerate the death process, drink alcohol as well; it expands the blood vessels and reduces body temperature. Just be patient until you fall asleep.

Jumping from high places

Jumping from high places is not painful at all. There's rarely any anxiety or fear. In fact, according to the accounts of suicide survivors, the fall can be quite pleasurable.

If you want to jump from a building, you need to inspect in advance the ground where you will land. Try to pick a building surrounded by concrete. Make sure, especially, that the area is clear of shrubbery: one sixteen-year-old girl who jumped from the fifth floor of her school survived her suicide attempt because she landed on a bush.

It's important as well to know the height of the





Annie Laurie MacNutt" and "Lars-Hamlet Knudsen," from Sit! The Dog Paintings of Thierry Poncelet, *published by Workman Publishing. To make his dog paintings, Poncelet, a Belgian artist and art restorer, purchases ancestral portraits at flea markets, antique shops, and estate sales; restores them; and then carefully paints a dog's head over the head of the original subject.*

building. The main reason so many of these suicides fail is that people don't jump from high enough. To ensure death, you need a fall of at least twenty meters. Remember that one floor equals about three meters. So in a typical apartment building, you should jump from the seventh or eighth floor.

Jumping from a cliff is less certain. The cliff may look deadly, but you might fall into the ocean and survive. So think about choosing a spot known for successful suicides. For cliffs, Ashizuri-misaki on Shikoku Island and Nishiki-gaura in Atami are the best choices. For waterfalls, try Kegon-no-taki in Nikko.

As for buildings, the best-known is the Takashima-Daira apartment complex outside of Tokyo. This site became famous in 1977, when a family of three jumped from the roof of one of the buildings. That led to a suicide boom: at one point, someone jumped from the building every three days. In 1981, the complex installed iron fences around the roof and set up a suicide hot line, which drastically reduced the number of suicide attempts there. However, if you want to jump from this spot, it can still be done. Building number 3-11-1 is easy to enter and has low fences. It's fourteen floors high and surrounded by hard concrete; a fall is lethal. To get there, take the Mita-line to the Shin-Takashima-Daira station. Turn left toward 4-Chome. The building you want is the one facing the railroad track.

[Life Stories]

CAN WE TALK? PLEEEASE?

From the National Talk Show Guest Registry, a computer database that contains information on more than 1,500 potential talk-show guests. The database is managed by The Research Department, a Reseda, California, company. The potential guests pay a monthly fee of three dollars to be included in the database. Twenty talk shows currently use the database to find guests for their programs.

Donna wants to appear on a talk show with her father, Don Pepper, in hopes of interesting a movie producer in his life story. She says her father's stories about his childhood during the Depression are full of humor, pathos, and even suspense, much like the movie *Stand by Me*. Mr. Pepper has a trunk filled with cherished memories on tape, titled *The Autobiography of Peanut Pepper*. Ms. Loxley submitted these stories to several producers, but they were returned "unread." Frustrated with playing the Hollywood game, she hopes that exposure on a talk show will generate the interest needed to get Mr. Pepper's experiences onto the big screen.

UNHOLIER THAN THOU

Ho-hum group biography for the "death metal" band Deicide, included in press material distributed by Roadrunner Records, the band's label.

Satanism [illegible] hum. Those years saw countless death metal bands adopt Satanic demeanors, but few offered any lasting sincerity. Even highly influential bands like Venom, Possessed, and early Slayer—as [illegible] them might have appeared—always allowed a [illegible]

This is where Deicide differs. The Clearwater, Florida, foursome embraces the same Satanic ideology as their death metal peers, but Deicide (which means "the killing of god") takes it to the extreme—going so far as to live their everyday lives proudly under the sign of the black mark.

"All of us are into Satanism," boasts Deicide guitarist Eric Hoffman. "We're into it every day—it's not just a show. You'd have to be serious about it to burn an upside-down cross into your head (as singer bassist Glen Benton has done). It shows that you are totally Satanic. My brother (Brian, guitar) has burned his arms numerous times, and [illegible] We're not just takin' it like Slayer. Let's see *them* burn themselves."

With each Deicide member boasting a heartfelt passion for the Satanic arts as well as a mutual worship for rabid death metal, one would think the members of Deicide would share a personal bond stronger than that of the average band. Not so. "The Satanism doesn't bond us personally as much as it does musically," explains Eric. "We're usually at each other's throats, threatening to kill each other. The reason we haven't broken up yet is because there [illegible] doing it for too long. Steve, Brian, and I are [illegible] for six or seven [illegible]

DANNY NEW

Is this guy Mr. Lucky or what? At age eight he gulped down eighteen ounces of pure bleach and survived. At nine he received a private tour of [illegible] first [illegible] hours later the plane crashed, killing everyone on board. At sixteen lightning struck so close to him that it sent him hurling to the ground. He was shot in the head while struggling over a gun. He's been stranded in the desert and walked over twenty-five miles in the dead of night before finally being picked up by a passing train. He has crashed cars, trucks, and even a motorcycle at 125 mph without getting more than a scratch. At age thirty-one he experienced death, saw the light, and spoke to someone he believes was God. With only a tenth-grade education, Danny has worked for the U.S. government, building and testing missiles and secret aircraft. He says he has even more bizarre experiences to share.

TOM DURRO

Tom says his life got off to a "slow start—then tapered off!" He failed four out of five courses in his high school sophomore year, which launched him on a roller-coaster ride through life. When he wasn't being rejected in over sixty job interviews, he thrived with careers in retail, restaurant management, and insurance. He calls his life story a "serio-comic drama" about a man who fought failure after failure, only to succeed through tenacity and sheer guts. His unique presentation will "move you from laughter to tears to awe." And when it's over, Tom says, you'll find that he has led you inescapably to the conclusion that if he can make it, anybody can.

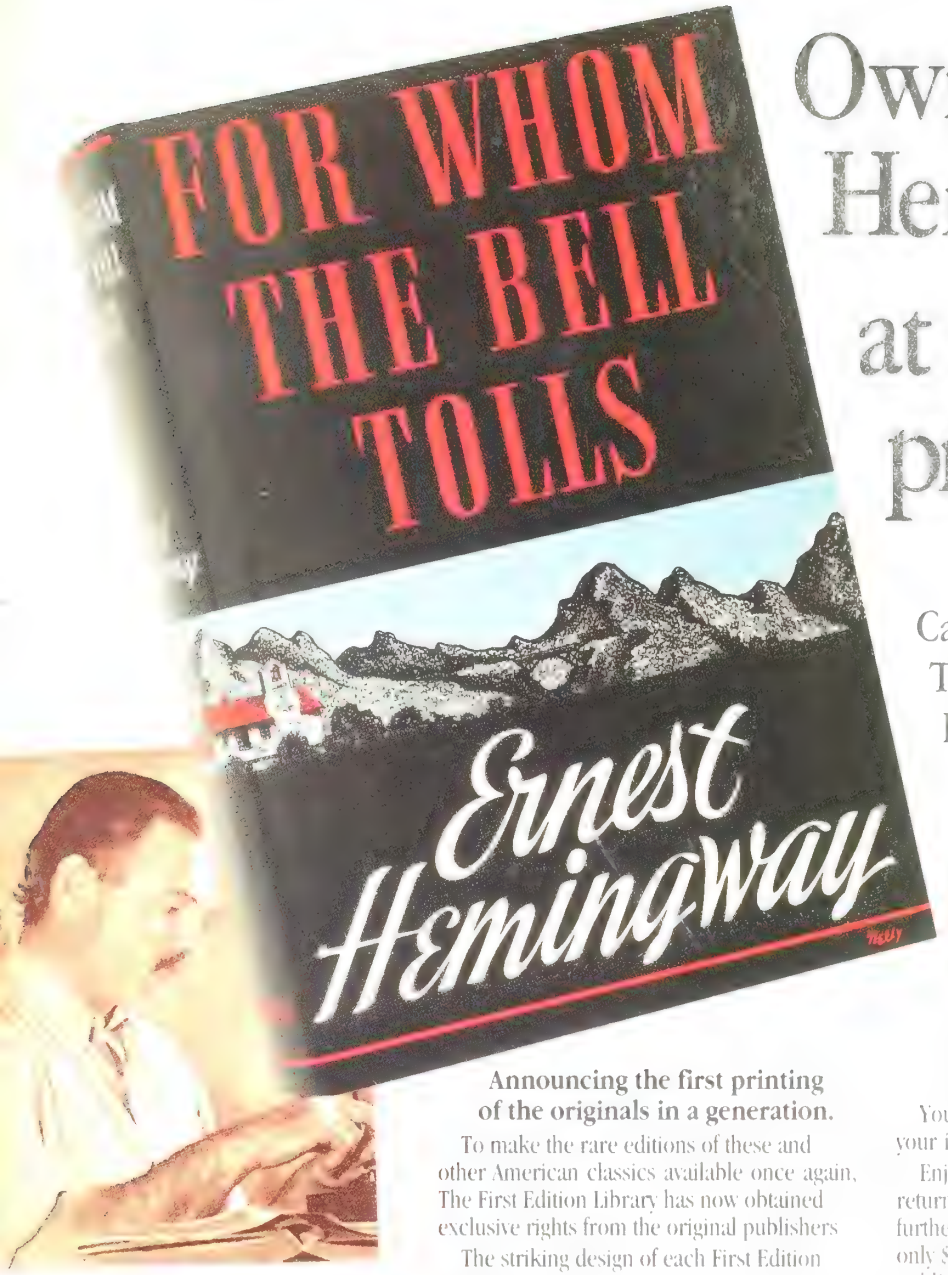
JOHN C. PENIEL

In 1970, John says, his "spirit body" left his "earth body" and became "one with the creative force." He says he returned to his earth body as "the messenger" with the following message: "The Creator loves all mankind—the good, the bad, and the ugly." He goes on to say, "The Creator was a ZILLION, but now is a ZILLION ONES. You're ONE. I am ONE. He is ONE. She is ONE. There are billions on earth and more in the universe."

WILLIAM L. MOLNAR

William was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and has traveled around the United States playing in polka bands. He recently "upstaged" Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt during Babbitt's race for the presidential nomination when he appeared on worldwide television decked out in a 1930s raccoon coat and played accordion for the crowd. He would like an opportunity to show other senior citizens ways to enjoy their retirement.

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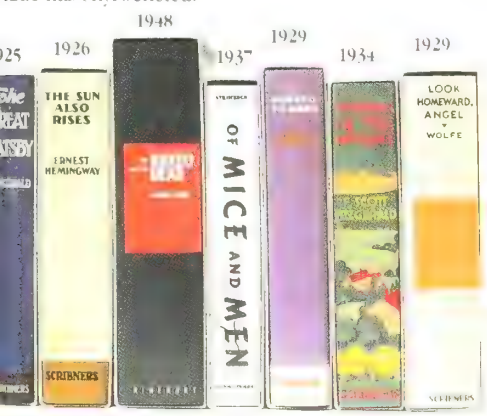
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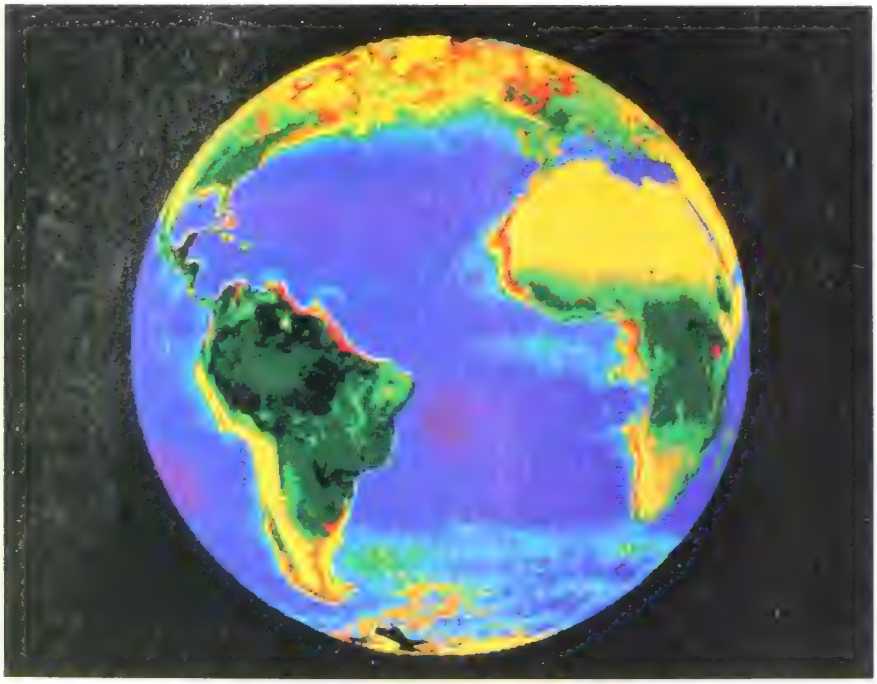


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"Global Biosphere," a computer-generated image of chlorophyll concentrations on the planet's surface made by Gene Carl Feldman. The colors indicate the amount of plant life: on the continents, the tan represents the lowest concentration, the green the highest; in the ocean, the purple and blue indicate the lowest levels of plankton, the red and yellow the highest. The map, the first to represent the entire global biosphere, is based on data collected from two satellites over several years. "Global Biosphere" is on display at the Smithsonian Institution through January 23, as part of The Power of Maps, *an exhibition organized by the Cooper-Hewitt National Museum of Design.*

THE VASTER WASTELAND

system located in Sausalito, California. Members computer "handles," were asked for suggestions to "fill the first 500 channels of broadcast, high-bandwidth

around the world.

MARY: The Patty Duke Channel, with archival footage of her wedding to John Astin shown in between episodes.

of the window of an industrial washing machine.

FEET: A channel of just feet—toes, ankles, heels, and maybe, in flashes of sluttiness, calves.

POTUS: A twenty-four-hour White House channel. Enough with the odd press briefing and Rose Garden chat; I want to see who's walking the halls. I want to see them shampoo the carpets at 4:00 A.M. I want to see the chef fixing a state dinner. I want an interview with the guy or gal who mows the lawn. I want to know what kind of homework Chelsea has today.

MEDIAK: The Supermarket-Aisle Channel. Long tracking shots of carefully stacked cans of potted [illegible] Interviews with stock clerks. *Box Cutting:* "How not to Slice the Cereal Boxes Open." *Checkers Corner:* "What's the Item Cutoff in the Express Line?"

HERO123: The All-Rejects Channel. Nothing but TV series that lasted less than one full season.

RBR: CNN Minus 365. Last year's complete CNN feed.

HOME: The Just-Like-Me Channel. Twenty-four hours of people on sofas, remote control in hand, watching TV.

YUPA: Channel Destructo. Twenty-four hours of very big things being blown apart, crashing into rivers, or being shot at with large weapons.

BRUCES: A "channel-surfing channel" that will show me whatever it is that various celebrities are watching at that moment.

CLIFFU: A channel that shows nothing but soaring buzzards, with shots from the buzzards' point of view.

BRUCES: The All-Graveyard Channel.

SMORSE: The Airport Channel. Prolonged views of active takeoff and landing runways. If there's a crash, you'll be the first to see it. Specials: *Congested Taxiways at LAX. Out of the Fog at SFO. The Nosewheel Camera Hour.*

MCVICAR: The Counter Channel. Every time another viewer flips to it, a big counter increases by one. Sometimes everyone would tune in just to watch the numbers tally really fast.

SMORSE: The Endoscopic Surgery Channel. Coronary arteries. Urethras. The brain stem. They can see it; why not you?

BRUCES: Abyssal Submarine TV, live from the depths of the Mariana Trench. Sunday's feature: twenty-four soothing hours of the sulfur-sucking tubeworms of the East Pacific Rise.

[Newspaper Article]

ARACHNOPHOBIA CIRCA 1880

From "Concerning Spiders: What Would Happen if These Detested Insects Were as Large as Sheep," in the sixth issue of Past Deadline: The Magazine of 19th Century News, *a quarterly published by Robert Hudson, in Troy, New York, that consists entirely of reprints of news articles from the 1800s. "Concerning Spiders" appeared in* Past Deadline*'s "Horrible" issue, which also included "A Child Carried Off by an Eagle and Killed," "A Preacher Murders a Ranch Proprietor—The Body Cooked and Served to Travellers," and "Extraordinary Self-Mutilation." "Concerning Spiders" originally appeared in the* London Telegraph; *it was reprinted in the July 15, 1880,* Troy Daily Times.

A "mouse-eating" spider, which has recently been added to the zoological society's collection, can only be justified in existing if we consider it to be a supreme effort of nature in the direction of the hideous. It can stretch itself out to several inches, is as black as a bear and as hairy, and is as ugly as a nightmare. Nature constantly makes these efforts to teach us how horrible she can be when she likes; but she slips her horrors at us only one by one, and at long intervals, so that the general impression of her tenderness and grace may not be too roughly shocked.

In insects, nature uses other means to work to the same hideous end, for the majority of the common kinds so small that their hideousness is not visible, and, where size is necessary, puts them out of sight, either under desert sands or tropical undergrowth or the [illegible] streams. It is [illegible] spiders alone [illegible], as the poet said, "mock the majesty of man's high birth, despise his bulwarks and unpeople earth."

What conceivable system of defenses, for instance, could avail humanity against a creation of spiders as big as sheep? They would float across the sea in the direction [illegible] to make so well, and swing themselves across rivers as they now cross garden paths. Leaping many miles at each jump, they could in a night traverse incredible distances, and waking in the morning a whole village might find itself inextricably woven up in a fog of web, every door, gate, and chimney enveloped in a suffocating cobweb of glutinous ropes, while the grim twilight was made terrible by the stealthy motions of a multitude of bloodthirsty spiders. The monsters would pounce upon the human beings one by one, swathe them in murderous meshes, and sling them up to their tunnel roofs like naughty boys in a row in an ogre's larder.

Even if they changed their temper with their bulk, and they became also as harmless as sheep, their presence would still be almost too horrible to be borne. Their existence would argue the presence among us of such flies as we should have to attack with shotguns, and grasshoppers which we should course with greyhounds. Our rivers would swarm with dragonflies that would buffet boats' crews with the wings of swans, our trees be munched up like lettuces by anaconda caterpillars, and wood lice would go about in the bigness of tortoises. Existence under such circumstances would be intolerable, and the necessities of spiders to keep down the insect packs and herds that would otherwise trample and jostle us out of Great Britain would only increase the horrors of our condition.

As a substitute for the common domestic cat, which has considerably lost its appetite for mice, the "mouse-eating spider" in Regent's Park might, perhaps, be usefully acclimatized. But what household would submit with any complacency to the domestication of such a creature? As it is, chairs prove hardly height enough when the average British spider, which can sit on a three-penny bit and is afraid of an able-bodied bluebottle, comes near a petticoat; and, if they were any bigger, we should have to keep ladders in every room for the ladies of the household to escape to the roof. The ordinary housemaid who "never could abide spiders" would go about her occupation with a drawn sword, and scullery maids plead for the last consolations of their religion before entering the cellars.

WITH FRIENDS I AM DIFFERENT

C

Carolina. A kitchen. Three real people, who must not be called characters, though that's what they, along with all the other real people, must become. A woman, about seventy; her son, her son-the-author, late forties; his wife, late thirties. The older woman (the mother) speaks, directing most of it to the non-Italian-American daughter-in-law, but all the time keeping the son in view, occasionally shooting him a challenging glance or remark. Her mood is better than you think; her mood is better than she thinks. She speaks as if the conversation has been rolling for some time.

In fact, her words inaugurate it:

"But what I want to know is why are we so involved, because they'll never change. Change? With us? Change my ass. I have to ask you something. What kind of a look do you call that on my son's face? He's just like his father. And his father is just like *his* father, that's where it all comes from, but my husband's father was the worst. He's the one who scared me. With their friends they're different, then they change in a hurry. My father-in-law was so cold you don't even know what I mean by 'cold.' I was ashamed to smoke, he never said a word and I was ashamed. You think I don't notice your husband when you smoke? I notice everything. And what are you looking at? What is he looking at? Naturally your husband is not as bad as my husband, but after all what do you expect me to say? With his friends I bet he's different, then all of a sudden they're warm, then they become warm, because their friends, the men especially, make them happy, let's face it, not us, and not their kids. Don't look at me like that, you don't scare me. I changed your diapers. He looks at his mother and his wife with that face. *Che faccia brutta!* The Lentricchia men, they're all the same, believe me, except for one of my brothers-in-laws who went to the other extreme. At least our husbands didn't do that, but maybe they should have, maybe they did that, too. Because let's face it, sex is another joke. What do you want me to say? *Why* are they like that around us? You went to college; you tell me. To be honest, I don't think even they know, and I don't care anymore, because in their own homes they don't want involvement, they go inside themselves. What are they doing in there? If they didn't want involvement, who told them to get married in the first place, if they didn't want involvement? What I want to know is how long are you going to kid yourself? If you have the answer, don't think I want to hear it, because I don't want to hear it, but if you have to, you can tell me."

I can't remember the words, I can't remember the context, maybe there wasn't one, because she doesn't need a context, but that's how I remember it now, five or six years later, my father in another room watching TV, my mother right in front of us, and I don't have to remind you who "us" is. She probably had a context; I just couldn't see it.

THE NAMELESS NINETIES

prone to opera. She talks in arias. Any and all disturbances presage apocalypse. Her enemies ought to croak, the bastards. All wounds are fatal, and anything can cause a wound, even nothing can cause a wound. It should also be mentioned that I've heard it said that I'm nothing like my father, who I'm not saying is what my mother says he is. According to him, I'm very like my mother. We're the same. "What do you expect? He exaggerates. He exaggerates everything. He gets it

from his mother. He gets excited, don't you, Frank'" Arias without discernible context, emotions for which I can find no matching circumstances. Apocalypse twice a week. Wounds that cannot be healed, not even by affection. Affection, in fact, makes them much worse, opens them right up again.

About a year ago, in New York, an editor at a major publishing house said to me that I ought to, up front, tell my readers who I am. Otherwise readers would have to crawl inside my head. She said "crawl inside." She felt that in order to understand the chunk she had just read, she would need to crawl inside my head, in order to find out who I am. When she told me that, I felt a strong urge to find out who she was. I wanted to open up her head. I should have said, "If I knew who the fuck I was, do you think I'd be writing this?" Or I should have said, "If I knew what the fuck I was doing, do you think I'd be writing this?" I was about to revise out "fuck," but if I did you might think that I was talking metaphorically when I said I wanted to open up her head. In order to see what was under the skull, what was actually in there.

I was talking to the New York editor in my favorite Italian pastry shop, way over on the East Side, near the East Village, a place I liked to frequent because anytime I went in there I saw an elegantly dressed elderly man, utterly manicured, a shave every four hours, a haircut every five days, who would occasionally walk outside to talk to youngish guys built like bulls in flowered shirts, with envelopes in their hands, who kissed him on the cheek when they left. It was a movie, post-*Godfather*. They knew they were in a movie; they were enjoying themselves in the movie.

The elegantly dressed elderly man scared me. I had to look at him out of the corner of my eye, which I became very good at, because I didn't want to be in his movie in the wrong role. I've never seen a face that brutal when he thought no one was looking at the face. It was the best brutal face I'd ever seen. I liked to look at it. Maybe a plastic surgeon could give me a duplicate. They say anything can be arranged in New York.

It would have been nice to call him over, to introduce him to the New York editor at a major house. Then I could have said, "Now say the words 'crawl inside your head' to this man." If only she could have coffee with this man every day, if only she could, she would become more sensitive in her relations with writers. Because if she didn't, with his demitasse spoon and his little pinkie sticking way out, he'd eat what was under her skull. I don't like questions about who I am or what I'm doing. If you wish to know who I am, ask my parents; they know. Or my friends, with whom it is said I'm different.

[Interview]

READING, WRITING, RAMBLING ON

From an interview [in Victor Vitanza's Spring 1993 issue of Composition Studies: Freshman English News, *a journal of "rhetorical theory" published at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth. You are accompanying the interview that Vitanza, who teaches rhetoric and composition at the University of Texas at Arlington, has lectured on topics that include "narrative theory, its construction, historiography of rhetoric, the discourses of hysteria and schizophrenia, [the] Re-enthistory of rhetoric, revaluation of evaluation, problem of the ethical subject, [and] Marxist-critical pedagogy." The interview was conducted by Cynthia Haynes-Burton, the director of the University of Texas's Writer's Center.*

CYNTHIA HAYNES-BURTON: Who do you think your audience is?

VICTOR VITANZA: My attitudes are that I am very much a "comp teacher," that I am a writing instructor, and that I am contemplative about what I do. I always am giving writing lessons and taking writing lessons. I don't know, however, if I am Lévi-Strauss or if I am that South American Indian chief in *Tristes Tropiques* that Lévi-Strauss indirectly gives writing lessons to. Perhaps I am both. Which can be confusing.

One of the fundamental questions that I am ever-reflexively confronted with is that I do not know who I am for this profession. I am a member of this field called composition studies, or rhetoric and composition, or whatever, while at the same time I am not a member by virtue of the fact that I do not follow what is considered to be the protocol for this field. In other words, I do not do what other people in the field do do. Therefore, many people do not consider me a member of them. It is what we do together evidently that determines whether or not we can sit, crawl, run, jump, or fly together. And this point I want length about knowing, doing, and making. In this sense, then, I am [illegible]

CYNTHIA HAYNES-BURTON: That's interesting.

VITANZA: Okay, so what I have said so far: I very consciously do not follow the [illegible] protocols. And yet, of course, I am. I [illegible] however, I do not. And yet again! Do you feel the vertigo of this? I hope that my saying all this, however, does not [illegible] into some form of "individualism," or "expressionism," for I do not believe in such a fatuous, dangerous concept as practiced in our field.

[Poem]

IN CASE OF RAPTURE

By David Clewell. From the Spring 1993 issue of The Missouri Review. *Clewell's most recent collection of poetry is* Blessings in Disguise, *published*

Warning: in case of Rapture,
this car will be unmanned.

And a fifteen-mile backup on old Route 1. I'll be in the
right behind, cursing, leaning on the horn, as
getting nowhere fast. And this time the old
completely,
roll down the window, and slowly bail out of
his Chevrolet
to join hands with a woman already rising
above the corner bakery.
Say the word and there goes the entire fish fry
contingent
from the local Kingdom Hall, called home
somewhere between grace
and potato salad, until the sky's so full of old-
time religion
eclipsed.
In case of Rapture, I'll try not to stare. Clearly
these people can't help the way they suddenly
appear.
Besides, looking directly at a spectacle like
that
could mean going blind. These things always
seem to happen
on the road to somewhere. Saul and his
Damascus. Me and my A&P.

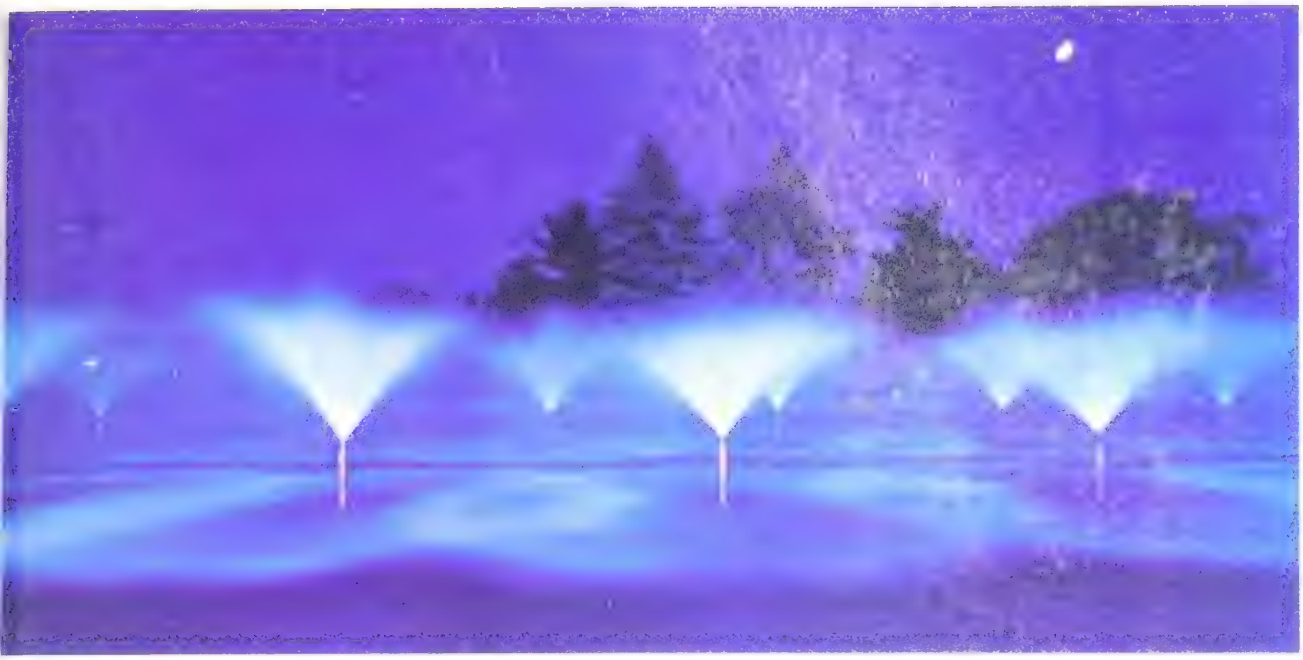
No wonder there's no shortage of preachers
more than ever occur to you on the radio at
home.
Minutes from my nightcap at the Idle Hour
I'm blessed:
we'll float upward just like helium balloons is the
way
this gospel man guarantees me. The balloon's
of a metaphor, but not the being lifted. That's
more for what it is than what it's like: to be
exalted, that assuredly lighthearted.
To have that much faith in the promise of thin
air.

It isn't long before I'm leaning on the jukebox
and laughing it up with the regulars, telling
them exactly
how I heard it, word for unbelievable word.
The guy shooting pool knows better, says he's
here to testify:
no matter how many can't-miss shots he still
has in him,
he's learned to count only on the money in his
pocket right now,
believes even if the Rapture comes tonight,
tomorrow's likely
to be just another day on the planet.
And after all, he's the man of old-fashioned
science:
the professor of gravity. He figures what rises
has to fall sometime: the lazy fly to right,
whole civilizations, the balloon some kid
attaches a note to
before she lets go, fully expecting it one day to
come down
anywhere but in her own backyard. He chalks
it up
to history, to how he's seen it happen so often
to even the slightest hope, genuine faith's
fainter sister.

If he's turning a little too solemn, blame the
serious drinking,
a lot of nights mostly like this one, waiting
for a stiff wind out of nowhere the spirit could
positively soar in,
not so much like a bird or a bright-colored leaf
or a kite
or a lighter-than-air balloon. Surely there is no
comparison,
no way of saying what it's like. Metaphor is an
assurance
we'll know something when we finally feel it,
but we could wait a lifetime for wind strong
to get that completely carried away.

•

For now it's clear skies. Not a soul in sight.
There's no illumination beyond the ordinary
light from stars that have made it this far
through the dark,
not another car on the road. Maybe the
Rapture's come
and gone while the good people lay home in
their beds,
manning their dreams until they were roused
fresh out of them.
Maybe they're already rising to some dimly
imagined occasion,
and we who remain behind are finally left alone



"Water Treatment Plant, Hempstead, Long Island," by Lee Stalsworth, part of an exhibition [illegible] on Manhattan, through February 26

to our own God-forsaken devices, wearing the
conspicuous smiles
of the damned, the ones so far removed from
any saving grace
that we might yet make a kingdom of it
here, in the rest of the only lives we can swear
to.

That's almost what I'd like to believe. I've got
a cold six
pack in the icebox tonight, just in case of
Rapture.
In case I feel the need to stay up late
celebrating, not believing
I'd ever live out my days like the way-too-
faithful,
ever carelessly mistake whatever isn't
hell
for part of heaven: a glass of house-brand
whiskey,
a postcard in the mailbox, a car noise I can
actually make
my doubting mechanic hear. But there have
been nights so long
the heart sputters, running on empty promises
again,
and I've said whatever I've had to say, talking
it up
on the chance I'd somehow rise above those
nights, radiant, once
and for all. Be plucked from behind the sweaty
wheel
of too many harrowing miles in a row. Be lifted
clean away.

Driving home this far past midnight, I'm not
[illegible]
there may be [illegible]
of what's possible
that pass for the miraculous, no matter how
inflated,
things that happen so far beyond words
there'd be simply no telling. Try
and you could end up looking desperately for
all the world
like someone [illegible]
with you and your down-to-earth frustration
right behind him,
watching him with your own eyes, undeniably
floating
out of your life. And you'd have to insist it's
nothing
[illegible]
in a hurry. Not when horns are blaring for
miles
[illegible]
stalling,
holding everything up. It's your face, frantic,
[illegible]
[illegible]
there
[illegible]

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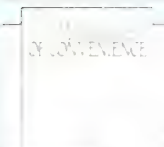
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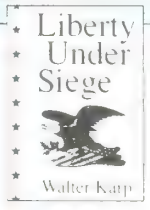
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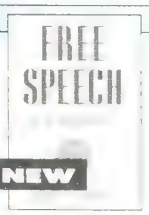
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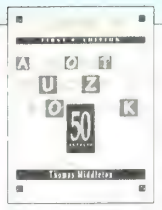
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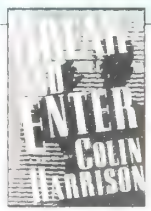
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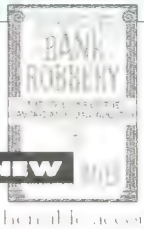
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[Oral History]

EARLY BLOOMERS

From Back Off! How to Confront and Stop Sexual Harassment and Violence, *by Martha F. Langelan, with a preface by Catharine A. MacKinnon, published this month by Viking. Langelan is a self-defense instructor and a senior economist for the U.S. Department of Transportation.*

One of the best ways to help children protect themselves is to teach them to stand up to the subtle forms of sexist intimidation that include casual harassment at home, at school, or in the neighborhood. Because sexual abuse is so common, learning how to stand up to sexist harassment is important training for self-defense as well as self-esteem. Here's a good example of an eight-year-old girl who successfully confronted territorial harassment by boys on the playground:

> I live in Maryland. I think girls have rights, too. This
>
> Then they said, 'You're a dumb girl, get off, we want to play.' I didn't say anything. I stayed on the slide. Then they called me a dumb girl again. I
>
> That made me so mad!
>
> I called my grandmother to come over here please.
>
> a big match once in Baltimore; it was neat. She was
>
> her what the boys did. She said, 'You go right back
>
> I went back and they were on the slide. My grandmother was watching me. I said real loud, 'YOU STOP HARASSING GIRLS!' 'THERE'S NOTHING FUNNY ABOUT BOYS' UNDERGIRLS' UNDERPANTS!' 'THAT IS A STUPID SONG!' 'GIRLS HAVE RIGHTS, TOO!'
>
> They looked so surprised! They got off the slide

were both intended to humiliate her as a female.

specific, sexist harassment

[Oral History]

MY SEX LIFE, CHAPTER ONE

From the material in Sex: An Oral History, *edited by Harry Maurer, a sixteen-year-old boy who lives in a Chicago suburb, included in* Sex: An Oral History, *edited by Harry Maurer. The book, a collection of interviews with people about their sex lives, will be published this month by Viking.*

I used to have some pornographic magazines that I sold them. I thought my parents were getting close to finding out that I read these magazines, and they were going to start looking to see where I was hiding them. It seemed more and more often they would walk by whenever I was looking at the stuff. Sometimes on weekends late at night, I would be watching *Saturday Night Live* and turn down the volume on the commercials, and since my parents were probably watching *Saturday Night Live* upstairs, they wouldn't come down, and if they did I'd hear them coming. But there was one time when my dad came down and locked the back door twice. That was when I realized they were catching on. So I sold the magazines.

I don't think I'd get extremely busted for having magazines. I'm not sure if there would be any kind of punishment. I know my dad is quite aware he did the same thing at my age. But when I first learned about this stuff, it was something you had to hide from your parents. That's just the way everybody does it. Nobody really knows why. My mom being a social worker, she may have read some of the reports that only 9 percent of child psychologists said they thought it would corrupt a thirteen-year-old's mind to have posters with naked women in his room. I can't remember where I got that from, I think it was on TV. And the 9 percent just thought it would change kids' sense of what an attractive woman would look like and give them too high hopes. They said that any boy who's seen this stuff and decided that's what he's going to look for in a woman is not going to end up with a girlfriend but is going to end up smoking cigars in a cheap apartment, still reading this stuff.

In my opinion, I have to agree it's part of your sexual growth, and I understand all women aren't going to look like that. But I do know it's a very intricate part of my life, the porno mags and stuff. It's the main thing that happens in my life right now. I haven't even gone on a date. I would with girls about dating, but that's pretty much it. I guess maybe half the people my age are dating, and about 3 percent are actually having sex. I don't know anyone my age who is. The 3 percent is just my estimate.

I think it's going to be a while before my par-

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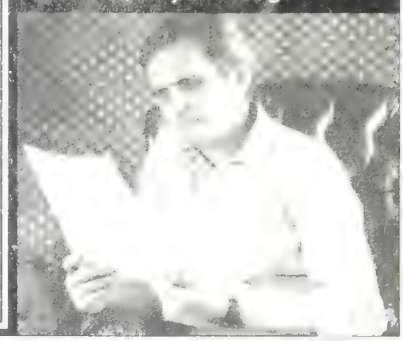
An important feature of any writing program designed for today's adult is flexibility—not one tied to a classroom, but a program that fits *his* schedule.

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Your personal coach will teach you how to

1. *Write articles and short stories, the building blocks of all good writing;*
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things they do. I think they know something is happening. They aren't naive enough to think this isn't part of my life. I do know some parents who would cry if they found out their little baby had been exposed to this corrupt world.

ready for my first date. I'm not sure how my parents are going to react, and it would be em-

saw that my mom was standing there in the door-

My parents are actually kind of loose about sex. They've tried to open the discussion. They try to make it very easy to talk about anything I might

I ever did have a question I think I could talk to them. The only important question I have that I don't think I could get a straight answer to is, How would you react if I told you I'm having my first date?

Miracle of Life and *The Miracle of Birth*. People

they show a man and a woman having sex and they have a close-up of the in-and-out. But you don't learn much about the details of sex in school. It's what most of the boys talk about, telling each

What I've found is most girls have experienced this stuff before most boys have. There are only a few boys in my school who I've heard talking about kissing someone with the tongue and I've actually believed them. Some of the boys talk about feeling certain parts of their girlfriends' bodies, but I don't believe most of it.

I'm not sure why, but in conversations I've had

until you're sixteen." I think it might become a possibility for me at the age of fourteen. I don't think I'll be having sex regularly until I'm fifteen or sixteen. It's not something I'm dying to do, because I question what you're supposed to do.

how does that start? I'd say that's the main thing that makes most people my age not quite ready to have sex. Trying to figure out or make up how it works or could work. First there's the question of how girls have sex with you, and then there's the question of how to get girls to have sex with you. The first one is one of the most important things I think about now, how it happens. I've seen enough and heard enough to understand how kissing works, but I don't know how to get from that to having sex. I suppose that's the next bridge to cross, how to turn kissing into sexual intercourse. At school it's perfectly all right to talk about it happening, but there's no way of coming out and asking your friends how it happens. It's one of those things that everyone thinks about, but no one's able to admit it. You think, Maybe everyone else understands this, maybe they're going to think less of me. I remember figuring out the definitions for different words, like "hooker"—I had to hear "hooker" three times before I figured out what it meant. It was not okay to ask a friend, you had to squeeze it out of a conversation, because maybe he's not going to be my friend anymore because I don't know about this stuff. So no one is going to come out and ask, How do you get a girl to have sex with you? Or, How do you start having sex?

On some of the late-night TV shows, I've seen people making out on the couch, and then it cuts off right where the guy unbuttons the girl's top button, and it begins again in the morning, where they're lying in bed. There's no way to figure out how it starts. I don't think girls know either, but I have the feeling that it doesn't matter what the girl does, it's all because of the boy. The boy makes stuff happen. It's the boy's job to start it, to physically start having sex. I can see on TV that the girl doesn't start unbuttoning the boy's shirt, it's always the boy unbuttoning the girl's shirt. They always go home to the boy's apartment. That just gives me the idea the boy is the person who starts it.

It creates a certain amount of pressure on me. I need to know what I'm doing, or else there's going to be the really embarrassing situation of it not working and neither of us knowing what to do, even though we want to do it. ■



The Book Thief

A true tale of bibliomania

By Philip Weiss

The house belonging to the greatest book thief in American history is a decaying red brick Victorian that overlooks the Des Moines River in the southern Iowa city of Ottumwa. There are decorative tin caps over the upstairs windows and some good-looking gingerbread over the front porch, but all the woodwork is rotting. The day I visited a year ago, pigeons flew from the eaves with a frightening clap.



Jimmy Hall, a seventy-nine-year-old widower with watery blue eyes who lives in the basement, let me in, and I went up to the second floor to see the bookcases. The house was warm, heated to seventy-[illegible] degrees on the Iowa winter, though no one was living above the ground floor. The [illegible] from a well-to-do family, [illegible] probably paying the fuel bill [illegible]

Pine cases lined all the rooms and hallways. Well-built and sturdy, they went from the floor to the twelve-foot-high ceiling, and every one was empty. I started counting and Mr. Hall went to get a flashlight. I counted eighty-six bookcases on the second floor before I gave up. There were bookcases carpentered into the back closet, there were bookcases along the bathroom walls, there were

Philip Weiss is a contributing editor to Harper's Magazine. [illegible] has lost a little [illegible]

Photograph by [illegible]

two-foot-tall bookcases running above the doorways.

"Boy, he had this son of a bitch stacked from floor to ceiling," Mr. Hall said.

The only book left in the house was a 1984 Ottumwa High School yearbook. The book thief sometimes looked at it to identify boys' names. He was a fagin. Many of his friendships were with adolescent boys. He gave them money to help him unload his truck and sometimes to steal things. They bought beer and hung out on his porch.

In the front room, we came to the giant glass-fronted cases in which the thief kept his most prized books—rare books on Indians, the 1480 Corburger Bible, a fifteenth-century world history that was the last not to mention Columbus. On paper tabs stuck to the edge of a case, I saw his spidery, stilted handwriting. "Business Government Morals," said one shelf. "Science. Physical and Applied," said another. The handwriting gave me a slight thrill of recognition; I'd seen it in a letter he'd sent me from a federal prison in South Dakota.

I lifted an old quilt from a bed in the front room and Mr. Hall said, "Poor Steve, he lived like a dog."

"He did?"

"Oh, hell yeah." Mr. Hall shut his eyes and shook his head.

long since past, a time when, as he later said to me, "there was still quality." Aside from such books as the ones on library security systems, his books were old, and he never sold any of them. Blumberg had a generous trust fund. He eschewed paper currency. A neighbor, Harvey "Gabby" Ware, described him for me. "One time he came here and—he was always filthy, my wife used to wash his chair with Lysol after he left—he said, 'Mrs. Ware, have you ever held $35,000 worth of gold in your hands?' And he reaches down into his crotch and comes out with a leather bag on a thong and poured it in her hands. Ted the carpenter was here. He said, 'Well, he doesn't have to worry about me going in after that.' "

Jimmy Hall and I went back down to his basement apartment, and he moved a box filled with dirt-encrusted potatoes so that I could sit down. Taped to the wall was a newspaper clipping from the trial in Des Moines two years before, and for the first time I saw a picture of the thief, a small man with a large forehead and watchful eyes, nondescript, the sort of person who disappears walking down the street.

Blumberg had stolen books from 327 libraries and museums in the United States and Canada, and after he was convicted many of the libraries had obtained transcripts of the trial. I'd read through them. The defendant never testified.

Blumberg had never married and his friendships were expedient, fragmentary, but he had found a kind of peace in libraries or among his books, sitting for hours, fixating on people out of the past

The bed wasn't actually a bed; it was a rotting leather recamier sofa from the late nineteenth century. Stephen Blumberg had surrounded himself with Victorian artifacts. The boys who had come to the house heard the wobbly sound of Victrolas playing 78s—Jelly Roll Morton, the Waldorf Astoria band. When the FBI went in four years ago this March and pulled out all the books, they also took several nineteenth-century paintings and eight Victrolas. Now everything that was left was slowly falling apart. The bedroom windows were still hung with braid-edged green velvet curtains from a century back. Their must got up my nose.

The book thief had tried to re-create a world

His lawyers had mounted an insanity defense and feared that he would seem too normal if he took the stand. Still, there were glimpses in those pages of who he was.

He was then forty-one (he's forty-five now) and according to testimony had driven around the country in nomadic manner for twenty years, usually in an old Cadillac or a truck. He'd never married and his friendships were expedient, fragmentary, but he had found a kind of peace in libraries or among his books, sitting for hours, fixating on people out of the past. He was inordinately quiet. He had an acrobatic sinewyness; an associate called him Spiderman. Now and then he put on a sports jacket: to get into Har



vard's libraries, where he stole some 672 books, or Claremont Colleges, where he stole approximately 780, he had masqueraded as a professor, though he had graduated only from high school. Several times he had been caught for trespassing—entering empty homes to steal cash or stained glass, things he would sell. That was what had hung him. "He had regular bouts with reality," the prosecutor, Linda R. Reade, had told the jury, as she chipped away at his insanity defense.

His book collection, which even Reade was forced to call the Blumberg collection, demonstrated intense interest in early Americana, Indian culture, the pioneers, city planning, the railroads. The defense said Blumberg was trying to save a forgotten world from a system (the libraries) that neglected it. Sometimes he penciled comments into the books' margins, praise for Indians, vituperations against authority: "Genuflect," "Eat it pig."

Librarians had made a point of preserving Blumberg's comments after they got the books back from the FBI. They'd even cited Blumberg in the books' bibliographic entries.

After Blumberg's appeals were exhausted in June 1995, I tried to get in touch with him. He was serving seventy-one months in a minimum-security federal prison in Minnesota. Prisoners called him Book Man. On the phone, a man named Bagwell, a paralegal working for the prison, warned me that Blumberg rejected interview requests, but I sent him a letter asking for a meeting.

after the FBI removed the book collection

Mostly what [illegible] Blumberg's crimes [illegible] he'd made for himself, like a drawing the draftsman gets lost inside, something with a continuous internal logic that has very little connection with reality. And then there were the books as things, nineteen tons of them he could not part with. His case seemed to throw a shadowy light on other bookish people, on a form of materialism that usually has social approval, even distinction. I liked books, and not just to read. I liked seeing them on my shelves, even smelling them. I had heard Susan Sontag saying something [illegible]

Photograph by [illegible]

a fire had forced her from her building the books are what she'd worried about, even though she was never going to read most of them again.

Weeks went by without a word from Blumberg, and I sent another letter. A couple of days later a seven-page letter arrived from him. It had crossed my latest in the mail and had a return address in South Dakota.

"As is customary with the Govt. Mr Bagwell lied to you," the penciled message began.

Blumberg said he'd been transferred to Yankton Federal Prison Camp, a minimum-security prison. He was vague about my prospects. "As far as more notoriety I have mixed views but really feel I don't have anything to hide. . . . As you know the millions they took from me was not a for-profit venture. . . . In that way I am different than the S+L presidents I currently reside with."

I submitted a request for an interview. The prison sent back a form showing Blumberg had turned me down, "pending further clarification of content of interview," someone had scratched in. We corresponded more. The Book Man's spelling was original. How could he have read so much and write "victoms," "innosent," or, for area, "aria"?

Then one night in October 1992 I got a collect call and heard a nasal midwestern accent on the line. Stephen Blumberg's manner was genteel and Seventies-hippiesh. "I'm trying to see what questions you have, where your head is at," he said. His flat monotone came out of his throat like a gear turning.

We talked aimlessly, then he said, "I had a fair number of clippings on bibliokleptomania. That's not a subject you're going to find much on."

"Is that a fair description of you?"

"Well . . . somewhat . . ." His voice trailed off. "It's kind of hard to resist."

I sent another letter. Blumberg wrote back and, using one of my favorite midwesternisms, said, "I'll visit with you." But he had a condition: "Go to Ottumwa before me." I was to visit his "mansion" and look up some people. "Also see if there are any cars in my parking lot due E of my kitchen. I own a 1960 Black Cadillac limo + a blue +

There were no cars in the parking [illegible] church next door. "Well here's Mr. Anderson [Ralph Andersen]," Blumberg had written, "a [illegible] of God . . ." The

drop. The pastor came from another part of the house. He had a square jaw and thinning blond hair. We sat down in the front room.

He said he hadn't had much to do with Blumberg. "I would say hello, sort of, across the fence [illegible] towed the cars last summer. They were falling apart. Andersen had seen high school kids kick out the windows.

Following the letter's instructions, I walked three blocks to the Ottumwa Public Library, a stately domed building, to look for Jerry Geib, the librarian.

It was Saturday, but luckily for me Geib had come in to go over records. A part-time farmer, he wore a felt hat whose brim and peak were broken. He had hooded blue eyes, a torn right ear, and a dryly comic manner. Geib said that the $50,000 to $80,000 a year Blumberg received—from his trust fund and a partnership set up by his father—was double what people were used to making around there.

"He's imbued with his importance—overly. I don't know quite how to phrase this. He thinks he's done something of great merit here."

What did that mean? Geib wordlessly pushed a file across the desk. Blumberg had been sending him letters and Christmas cards, trying to get under his skin. In one of them, the prisoner proposed the formation of a committee to raise money to put up a bronze statue in Ottumwa Park right outside the library. The figure would be Stephen Blumberg wearing a coat that had been mentioned during his trial, one with oversized pockets sewn inside for slipping books into.

"I'd have my arm outstretched and the inscription will read, 'Seek and ye shall find knowledge.' "

It was dark when I got outside and headed for the north side of town. "Now asend the hill and you'll find on the right a delapitated grey 2-story house with a piece of plastic pushed into the front door paine. The garage doors will be wide open with an inoperable car inside . . ."

A tall young Indian man opened the door. Carl Thrasher's hair fell past his shoulders, and his T-shirt, too short by several inches, showed his long flat stomach.

He let me in. He sat on the floor and kept at his work, making traditional jewelry. On the floor were several bear claws, and as we talked he rubbed stone disks in mineral colors against a sort of emery board, shaping them.

After I said my piece, Thrasher got a foul expression.

"I want nothing to do with him," he said. "He sent me this many letters and I wrote 'Return to sender' on them. He's a genius—he could steal Fort Knox, just about. But he's where he belongs."

A sign outside of Mecklinburg, South Dakota, calls the area the hay capital of the world, and I come into Yankton, two towns further west. Yon see field after field of hay stacked in high, institution-seeming walls. Then there are the stockyards and the road begins to curve, paralleling the Missouri River a few blocks south. It's a pretty old town, though bleak in December, when I visited.

In 1988 the federal government bought the abandoned Yankton College campus for use as a prison camp. The campus dates to the 1880s; some of its brick buildings are landmarked. It's in a residential neighborhood, and though prisoners cross city sidewalks to go to chow hall, they're forbidden to have contact with the townspeople. The townspeople seem to like it that way. They avert their eyes, walking past the five-foot, unscalable iron fence.

I'd set up two days of interviews. I got to the prison before nine o'clock and checked in at the Floyd building, a low modern structure. A woman seated in a motorized wheelchair counted my tapes to make sure I didn't leave any with the prisoner. Past her was a long cinder-block visiting room containing wooden chairs with large vinyl cushions.

A guard brought Blumberg in. He was small, about five seven, and his posture was droopy, like a truant's. He had on a green Army surplus coat over his khakis. The guard patted him down, then Blumberg stepped around the metal detector because his black-steel capped boots would set it off.

We sat down in the east end of the room. He had a calm staring expression, and his arms looked pale, effete—bookish. His eyes were round like a child's but also had crow's-feet.

I started in by talking about all the bookcases, and he warmed to the subject.

"Did you notice on the alley side, I put plywood on the inside of the windows and painted it black?" he said.

"No."

"I didn't want the place to look unsightly. I pulled the shades partway down." Of course, the windows were unusable—they were covered over by bookcases.

He sat perfectly still. Sometimes he crossed his legs, but he left his hands in his lap and looked at me. He had a salt-and-pepper mustache with white wires of hair coming from it. His graying hair looked to have the consistency of straw. A webbed military belt with a steel clamp buckle was squinched tight around his narrow waist. I don't think I've met someone so dry before. His eyes didn't glint, his wide mouth was dry.

I'd heard Blumberg could talk [illegible] books in an academic way, and before long he got going. He talked about Henry Raup Wagner, whose works he had stolen from [illegible] leges.

"He was a splendid individual. He wrote the cartography of the Spanish Southwest, which is one of the foremost [illegible] published on old Mexico. He was [illegible] engineer, I believe, like Herbert Hoover, and became engrossed in writing bibliographies. He was at Berkeley for a while, taught there, moved down to San Marino, the Huntington Library. He was a little younger than Henry Huntington. If you want to read a good biography of him, read Ruth Frye Axe. She was his secretary. Read her biography."

I moved the conversation to libraries. Blumberg grew a little impatient; he had to explain their function to me. They were [illegible] he said, and they were often arbitrary.

"What libraries are . . . they're in the information business," he said. "Let's say you have a time machine and you're living back in 1890, and these beautiful periodicals [illegible] WWII. 1920s the style changes, and you've got all these magazines and a limited amount of space. So stuff got thrown out then very early, even later."

I'd come across the [illegible] reading about bibliomaniacs (in the library, of

"I want nothing to do with him," the neighbor said. "He sent me this many letters and I wrote 'Return to sender' on them. He's a genius—he could steal Fort Knox, just about. But he's where he belongs"

course). Libraries couldn't be counted on. A librarian [illegible] Frognall Dibdin had written in *Bibliomania, or* [illegible]

Blumberg explained how his own library was organized. The front room was California and the back of the house was New England. You walked through Minnesota, Illinois, and so on. The bathroom was a sorting area ("and, of course, it's always nice to have something to grab to read on the crapper") and the head of the stairs was Ohio. In the closet there were books printed and collected by Robert Clarke, the nineteenth-century historian and publisher.

"It would have been, if he'd come up there and been looking at the books himself, he would have had his books in that area, you see—"

"But Robert Clarke is dead, isn't he?"

"Right . . ." Blumberg nodded his head. "But isn't it nice we can talk about him? Most of the librarians wouldn't even know who he was or what significance he had. We haven't forgot about him."

He got up to go to the bathroom, and I wondered how anything could come out of him, he was such a dry little stick. I remembered a passage from the trial transcript, when an elderly antiques dealer was asked to describe Blumberg at twelve.

"A skinny little guy, dirty," she said. "When I say dirty, like dry old soot. I can remember his eyes. His eyes were very prominent. A gentleman, a very gentle young boy. . . . Can you imagine a twelve-year-old boy being interested in the design of hardware on a door, door hinges, window openings? . . . At that point he could see the beauty. I think it was just pure instinct."

The boy came from a well-off family. He had grown up in a St. Paul suburb, and his father had made a point of living modestly. The trial transcript said that Blumberg's great-grandfather Moses Zimmerman, a German-Jewish immigrant, had made his fortune by provisioning the Allies during World War I, selling horses and horse collars. He was a collector too, of a kind: he'd collected tracts of real estate as far away as Montana that had proved lucrative to his descendants. Blumberg's father had gradually left his work as a doctor to go into the family real estate business.

When Blumberg came back from the bathroom he said, "Did you see Geib?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"He holds your crimes against you."

"That's all right. That's his problem. He doesn't want to send me a Christmas card, does he?" He gave a dry mischievous laugh.

"He said you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth."

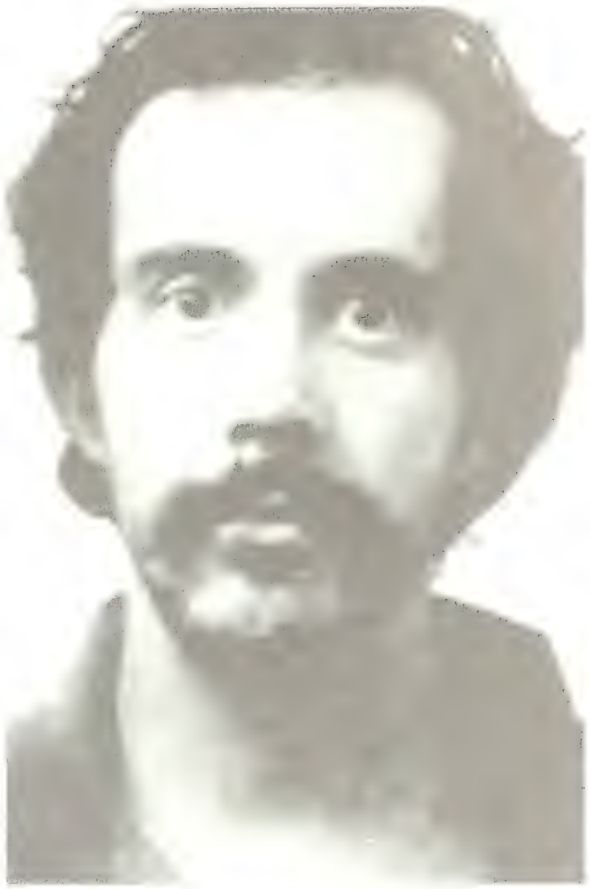
Blumberg got a cross look. "If I was I would have had to eat cod-liver oil with it," he said. "Yeah, you can use the spoon, but you got to eat cod-liver oil with it, so what good is it."

It was lunchtime. Out the window, prisoners in khakis and dull green coats were walking to lunch. I went to the vending machines, which had a sign saying only visitors were to handle money. I got the prisoner a ham sandwich and a can of seltzer, and he started in on the sandwich a bite every three minutes.

> Blumberg didn't use the word "stealing." He said he was building his collection—American history, with the "high spots" of literature thrown in. "I'm in for having books borrowed from the library, overdue library books"

We began talking about stealing books. Blumberg didn't use the word "stealing." He said he was building a collection—American history, with the "high spots" of literature thrown in, too. Another time he said, "I'm in for having books that had been borrowed from the library, overdue library books."

On the phone he'd said that he wouldn't tell me how he'd "compromised systems," but soon that prohibition dissolved. He seemed proud. His methods had been the cat burglar's. He was five seven, 125 pounds (prison had fattened him to 145), and anything he could grab with his hands he could pull himself up on, anything he could get his



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umbwaiter to get
rom open areas to
estricted ones. "I'm
retty sharp about
hat," he said.

One time he re-
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ervice-elevator
haft to get into the
haft and had be-
gun climbing when
he elevator start-
d up. He had had
o press himself in-
o an inspection
ay in the wall to avoid being crushed.

The prisoner's language was a mixture of gen-
eel discussions about this or that book studded
with lines that might have come from a 1940s
gangster movie. "I seen it was an easy shot, so I
worked it for a week. . . . I was up to my stuff. . .
They [illegible]
our."

Once he was inside a library, Blumberg's m.o
was to get keys so that he could have the run of
he place. He [illegible]
aking them apart since he was a boy. At Harvard
using a false faculty I.D., he paid for a ninety-
day stack pass, then went in one day with a pair
of horseshoe-nail-pullers inside his massive overcoat. Blumberg used the tool to remove a lock
cylinder, replaced the cylinder with a blank he'd
brought with him, then took the boosted cylin-
der around to locksmiths.

"It was a Russell and Irwin lock. This key se-
ries was restricted in Boston, and I had to go all
the way to Montreal before I could get it. I'd tell
them I had an apartment building and I wanted
to master it. I talked about rentals and prob-
lems." When he finally found the master, he
went back to Harvard and replaced his blank.
"After that I went wherever the staff went in—

everything."

[illegible]
floored stacks of

Thomas Wolfe, for
out to read every
up after a shelf. The
Alcove. It was kind
of a little plusher
than the rest. I'd sit
"I
the lowest level,
unjustly neglect-
Fearing collection
mayor of Newport, Rhode Island, in the 1890s,
he collected books on trout fishing that he
ble endpapers.

"I got interested in Fearing as a person," Blumberg told me. "I don't suppose Harvard even cared about Fearing. Widener is like a huge warehouse
basement in the corner and nobody even used them. The paper was acidifying."

Blumberg's talk was salted with butterness, but there was never any profanity, and there were glints of refinement.

And now and then when Blumberg's eyes found me, they seemed both dull and frightened.

"Your magazine, why are they so interested in all this?" he said. "It's not like I had much impact

He was fishing. I said, "Because it was unusu-

"But more as a freak or a moralist—what's their interest?"

"Well, not as a moralist."

He hummed to himself. "Yeah, pointed commentary cheapens a magazine."

Librarians supplied the moral outrage. Blumberg's acts devastated librarians, and their feelings helped to ensure his conviction.

Librarians are slightly monastic, charged with duties the outside world doesn't fully understand. In fact, their duties conflict: on the one hand, they must conserve books for future scholars; on the other, they're bound to serve today's public, people who often handle books carelessly. "We all remember our first experience of a librarian—shushing you," Fraser Cocks, the former curator of special collections at the University of Oregon, told me. This gives rise to the stereotype of librarians as humorless and repressed. "Librarians and their ideas of order can be the butt of jokes, because we admit that the issue is basic, serious," Roger Stoddard, the curator of rare books at Harvard College Library, wrote in *Bulletin du Bibliophile*, a French journal, in an article about the Blumberg case.

Blumberg subverted those holy orders. When in July 1987 librarians at Claremont Colleges' Honnold Library discovered that many rare books, including Hakluyt's *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation*, were missing, the news hit the staff like the death of a family member. Susan M. Allen, then the assistant to the director of libraries, told me in a phone interview, "There was disbelief. A great but very quiet search of the entire premises began in the hopes that this awful discovery was not true." But, of course, it was true. The administration was alerted but, to make matters worse, did not appear to take the losses seriously. Six weeks into the disaster the head of special collections resigned. "I became department head [a month later] in an atmosphere of depression and paranoia," Allen later wrote in *AB Bookman's Weekly*, a journal for booksellers.

Similar grief struck the University of Oregon later in 1987, when the staff of the manuscripts room realized that twenty linear feet of papers from Oregon's territorial days—the diaries of pioneers and writings about Indians—were missing. At first, they undertook the painstaking process of "reading the shelves," going from one volume to the next to see what was still in its place. When at last they reported the theft, the librarians themselves were placed under suspicion. "They even asked if we would take a lie-detector test," says Hilary Cummings, then the curator of manuscripts.

"It destroyed these people emotionally," says a librarian familiar with the Oregon situation. Within two years the four staffers in the collection had abandoned their positions, one for retirement. Hilary Cummings left the profession entirely. She now teaches preschoolers. "I didn't want to go to work," she says. "I never felt I had regained the trust of the administration."

Stephen Blumberg told me of his West Coast pickings. "Oh, I was getting some gems," he said. At Claremont he had used a popsicle stick to open a library door—"I would always improvise tools"—then stole a key ring.

The University of Oregon required greater cunning. The rare-books rooms were secured by double doors with a lock at waist level and also a dead bolt going into the floor. Blumberg had found a dolly in the library and, wheeling it over, wedged its platform under the center of the doors. He used the dolly as a lever, putting all his weight on one side, thereby forcing the doors up high enough for the dead bolt to clear the floor. Then, still perched on the dolly, Blumberg had kicked the lock, causing the doors to spring apart. Dolly and thief clattered to the floor.

"I sat for a couple of hours reading the bibliography [the library's list of holdings] by flashlight, then I went on a little shopping trip," he said. "See, I was interested in the settlement of the West. I got a whole box of Applegate. And Isaac Stevens. Eva Emery Dye, the 1900 manuscript of *McLoughlin, an Oregon Chronicle*. [The actual title is *McLoughlin and Old Oregon: A Chronicle*.] I already had the first edition of that, but they had the original manuscript. I put it in

> Blumberg felt lucky. While in custody, after being caught in a restricted area, he'd been able to secretly swallow the rubber UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA stamp he used to falsely label books from other libraries

.y house with the first edition."

"Did you read it?"

"I just read a couple of chapters."

The West Coast thefts had the effect of bringing into the Blumberg case its most approachable figure, a rangy, good-looking Washington State University campus police detective named Stephen Huntsberry. In February 1988, librarians at WSU discovered that precious Mexican manuscripts were missing. Sergeant Huntsberry was sent over to investigate. When a librarian used the term "incunabula," Huntsberry frowned. The librarian explained that it referred to the infancy of printing, and to demonstrate handed him a book printed in 1493. It occurred to Huntsberry, as he turned its pages and smelled the mold of ages, that Columbus could have read that book.

"That's when I got hooked," he told me.

Huntsberry is a former lounge singer, Navy man, and drywall contractor. By turns he explained to me that he's a "weirdo," that he works in the sticks," and that he doesn't like the picture people have of campus cops as "key janglers." He said he "went overboard" trying to find out who'd stolen the books. To this day people in federal law enforcement make fun of him as a small-timer. That Huntsberry is, but he also outperformed the feds. He was the only cop who treated the theft seriously without having to be pumped up with estimates of the stolen books' value.

He thought he'd broken the case when library records established a pattern of suspicious visits by a Matthew McGue and Huntsberry learned there was a University of Minnesota professor with that name. But McGue was able to convince police that there had to be an impostor. In fact, Blumberg had gotten hold of McGue's university identification in the mid-Eighties. "I found it," he told me blankly. He'd forged birth certificates with McGue's name on them and said he'd gotten five different driver's licenses.

Huntsberry helped put together a flyer that libraries on the West Coast circulated. The flyer recounted the few sightings of "McGue" reported by librarians. Some library employees said they had seen "a transient-looking individual, standing before the expensive Shakespearean" collection, "an individual whose manner was somewhat eccentric and his dress somewhat shabby . . . [but he] appeared very knowledgeable about books."

Then Huntsberry got a break. At 11:40 P.M. one night in April 1988, a custodian at a library at the University of California at Riverside stopped Blumberg in a restricted area that was to have closed at 5:00. He brought Blumberg to the desk, and a librarian who had one of the flyers called the police. After they found a satchel containing dental tools, Blumberg—processed by the police as Matthew McGue—was charged with trespass and possession of burglary tools, then released on his own recognizance.

Blumberg had been [illegible] books from other libraries. And the Riverside County police had failed to discover his car, which was [illegible] with stolen books. He left Riverside and never showed up for his court appearance.

But Riverside police [illegible] fingerprints, and Huntsberry, who'd been informed of the arrest, sent them to the FBI and Minnesota state authorities. "The FBI *still* haven't gotten back to me," he says. But thanks to Blumberg's record of trespassing arrests over the years, Minnesota was able to make a positive identification: Stephen Carrie Blumberg. Convinced this was his man, Huntsberry passed the I.D. on to the FBI.

And there the case died. An agent in Minneapolis interviewed Blumberg's father, Henry B. Blumberg. But the doctor responded evasively to questions about his son's activities. "I wanted to be spared the [illegible] for ratting on my son," Dr. Blumberg told me. "But any idiot could have caught Stephen with a house full of books."

David Oxler, an FBI agent who later arrested Blumberg, [illegible] done to unearth Blumberg's collection. "But the pieces didn't fall into place," he says. It's true that Huntsberry's case against Blumberg was largely circumstantial. Perhaps the FBI would have needed stronger evidence before proceeding with a search of Blumberg's house. But how hard would that have been to obtain?

Law enforcement's [illegible] made the library community feel isolated. "The case was never regarded as big enough," says Fraser Cocks. "Just a bunch of librarians getting upset about some overdue books."

It was getting on to three o'clock, the end of the day, and Blumberg was still nursing the same can of blackberry seltzer I'd gotten [illegible] ally when you spend a couple of hours with [illegible] Blumberg's face bore little expression. Sometimes he laughed, a boyish snicker mixed with an old man's chuckle.

He told me about the days after the first FBI investigation, when he got out of Minneapolis and took all his books with him, first to a warehouse in Amarillo, Texas. A boy named David Olson helped him load his truck. He spoke of their Texas days in a way that reminded me of American [illegible] movies, an anti-idyll, outside civilization.

[illegible]

and brushed them into a coffee can.

"We were driving out Boys Ranch road. I found a black widow under a board and [Olson put it in with the tarantula] to see which would fight the other one. There was a door between our two rooms and every morning I'd go in his room and take inventory; I'd say, 'Now where are the spiders?'"

"No. He'd shake them together and they'd, like, separate from one another. The black widow would get up in the corner of the can under the lid and weave."

Then the rent at the Amarillo warehouse went up and a neighboring tenant got bitten by a brown recluse spider (not one of Olson's pets). The man's arm swelled up, and Blumberg decided to move north. With his father, who says he tried to remain ignorant about what his son was up to, he scouted locations in Iowa not far from the interstate. He bought the Victorian on North Jefferson Street in Ottumwa as temporary shelter, for $16,000, and then settled uncomfortably into the town. He set to work building his bookcases.

I asked Blumberg if he had read the books before he lost the collection. He said he had dipped into the histories, not the fiction. He was sorry he had not read his first edition of *Leaves of Grass*. But he remembered the portrait on the frontispiece; he liked the fact that Whitman was casual, not wearing a suit.

was too busy moving around the country, driving for hours on end in one direction because he liked the coffee they served at a certain truck stop, or suddenly remembering a library he meant to hit. "A little here, a little there," he said. "I knew in my head which libraries have what." It was not enough to have one book, either. He had to have multiple copies. He had several first editions of *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*. "A couple in green cloth, another in orange or red. One, I think, was in a slipcase."

This is a classic sign of bibliomania. "Above all his anxiety [is] to have two or three different editions of the same work in his possession," a Scottish pamphlet called "Bibliomania" warned in 1867. The literature of bibliomania is largely nineteenth-century. Books mattered then more than they do today: it was a time when books were at the center of cultural expression, when they were worn apart simply by being read so many times. Today we worry about people who watch seven hours of television a day; then, bibliomania was a popular term and a subject of concern. It had an aura of madness. "He who is affected by this mania knows books only by their titles and dates, and is rather seduced by the exterior than the interior," a French scholar is quoted as saying in the Reverend Dibdin's *Bibliomania*. Gustave Flaubert was drawn to the subject. In 1836, when he was in his teens, he wrote a short story called "Bibliomania," about Giacomo, a mad Spaniard who would kill for a book. "It was not learning that he loved, it was its expression," Flaubert wrote. "He loved a book because it was a book; he loved its odor, its form, its title."

I asked Blumberg why he had stolen so many books.

"You know, I figured I was the mere custodian of those books. I would keep them, share them, pass them on to somebody else . . ." He looked up at me. "Who really has the right to possess knowledge?"

He fell back into Seventies phrasings, as he voiced his hatred of the establishment. And something else kept coming up, something he'd mentioned in his first letter to me: the mansion he once owned in Minneapolis's inner city. You can see it from the freeway there, on Elliot Avenue, a magnificent turreted brick building now used as a day-care center. Blumberg had coveted the place. Built in 1888 by a leading flour miller, it was a relic of the era of quality. He'd bought it in 1976 for $76,000, $30,000 of which he delivered in a brown paper bag. Then he'd rented out parts of it. The tenants and building inspectors were an endless source of grief. Testimony at the trial indicated that Blumberg's father had colluded with a tenant and

The literature of bibliomania is largely nineteenth-century. Today we worry about people who watch seven hours of television a day; then, bibliomania was a popular term and a subject of concern



He told me about the time he and Brian Feeuwe, a twenty-year-old who had traveled with him for weeks at a time across the West, walked out of the University of Southern California library, their arms stacked with the oversized turn-of-the-century photographic collection of Edward S. Curtis. Judging Blumberg had laughed at the students manning the exits. One day those boys would be corporate executives. "They would be passing orders and doing things to me." His laugh was a bit snarl and it showed small front teeth that fit against one another like mine or cops.

Blumberg was known to troubled young men—"broken birds," in the words of Ray Cornell, a private investigator who worked for Blumberg's defense team. One of the youths he traveled with earned money as a male prostitute, Blumberg told me. The client, a lo to the art of pederasty about the case Thrasher, the neighbor in Ottumwa, said Blumberg would touch boys on the and tell them they looked good. In the trial transcripts, Blumberg's psychiatrist said he'd been sexually assaulted in a detention center as a boy, but that his sexuality was undetermined. When I brought this up, Blumberg grew vexed. He said he wasn't gay, that in fact he had thought of marrying; it was just hard to find a woman who would tolerate his peripatetic life. I dropped the subject.

And anyway, his emotional life was in the books. He spoke of them as though they had feelings. "These poor old books were laying out in the dirt," he said, explaining why he had put something like Bill Adler and Bess Myerson's *I Love New York Diet* in the collection, and it brought to mind the pathetic fallacy—John Ruskin's notion that a violence of feeling produces a false impression of external things. We project our feelings onto objects, attribute to them human qualities.

Blumberg was on intimate terms with the books. For instance, sometimes he would lick them. He had needed to remove the card pockets from the inside back cover of the books before taking them from the library and didn't want to be seen wiping the covers with a sponge. So, bending over a book, he would lick the card pocket until the gum softened and he was able to work it loose with his hands. Blumberg's attorney brought this out on cross-examination, trying to show that Blumberg was insane. He might lick a dozen books a night.

The man who gave that testimony at the trial was the man who sold Blumberg to the feds. Blumberg had known Kenneth Rhodes for fifteen years. They'd dealt antiques together, and for a while Rhodes had lived in the Ottumwa house. Rhodes, then forty-six, was a ne'er-do-well. Several times in the Seventies and Eighties he had worked as an informant for the Drug Enforcement [illegible] a business called Apple Radiator Air Conditioning [illegible] handle sports betting out of Las Vegas—a laundering operation.

Rhodes turned Blumberg in two years after the FBI had abandoned its investigation. In 1990 he went to the Detroit FBI office with a handful of photographs from inside the Ottumwa house and [illegible] out for money, and eventually the government paid him $56,000 for his information. Based on Rhodes's testimony, the FBI got search warrants on several addresses and served them on March 19, 1990. One of the warrants was for a safe-deposit box in a St. Paul bank, and when the agents went [illegible] and a flannel shirt. He smelled. They shouldered him aside and seized more than $115,000 in gold and silver coins, but they didn't arrest him.

Blumberg was shaken. He went to a pay phone and called Kenny Rhodes in Ottumwa; Rhodes recorded the call. The transcript of the call lat-

er proved to be the most damaging evidence at the trial.

"What do you want me to do, Steve?" Rhodes said.

"Oh, God, I don't . . . ," Blumberg said. " . . . I'll make a run down to get you. If nothin' else, burn the two suitcases in the attic and in the closet. . . ."



"Okay. Now listen, now you be careful. . . ."

phones."

The suitcases were filled with the library labels he had removed from books; he had hoarded those too.

Blumberg got back to Ottumwa at 1:30 in the morning and surprised three FBI agents sitting at his dining-room table. "He had the drop on us," one of the agents recalled, but it didn't matter. Blumberg went gently.

The arrest drew national attention. Librarians were quoted as saying that the theft was the "crime of the century," and a premature, inflated estimate of the books' value gained currency—up to $40 million, according to one FBI source. The *Ottumwa Courier* had a front-page photograph of the seized books and said that Blumberg was an "unkempt Howard Hughes type eccentric."

It was getting to the end of my first day wit Blumberg. I asked him if it was true he had licke the books.

He nodded. "It was bitter. I carried butte scotch Life Savers. Or cinnamon."

I brought up other oddities. There was the th ory of state control he had described to the boys: th

government was taking all the money out of the sy tem, and one day no one would have cash, y would just have a bar code printed in invisible i on your head, like a Social Security number.

"They do it with fish and other things," Blu berg said.

"Do you think you're insane?"

He didn't react. "I think I know reality. But, y know, insanity's a very fine line. There's aspe of reality that I see that are insane."

And what about the claim that he used scratch out the eye from atop the pyramid d dollar bills because he believed it was the syste watching him?

"That's supposed to be God," Blumberg sa "But it's a symbol of their power."

I got out a dollar bill.

"Oh, I didn't do it with a lot of them. Just happened to be on line."

Blumberg folded the bill and with a rapid mov

ient of his thumbnail picked out the eye. He icked it to the floor and smoothed the bill on the nee of his khakis. The hole was neat and perfect. was putting it back in my wallet when he moned—

"Say, that's an interesting driver's license you ot . . ."

I handed it over. He ran his finger over the plasc coating, chewing at his lip.

"Real cheap," he said. "Easy to copy. See, it's not minated. They think they're so sharp, but there's lways an angle around them."

It was what many people had said during the rial: that Blumberg was going to go back to his ld ways when he gets out of jail, in 1996. Even he judge had said as much. Blumberg's psychiaist, a man named William Logan who at the time orked at the Menninger Clinic in Kansas, told he by phone that from Blumberg's perspective, ne of the good things about prison was that it ave him the "opportunity to hook up with some ellows with compatible talents."

"I look at this here as a school that I never ent to," Blumberg said to me now. "I've learned lot of tricks in here."

I took back my license. "Steve, are you getting ack into this when you get out?"

"I don't think so." He shook his head and aughed his dry little chuckle. "Nooo. Nooo."

responded, "No complaints."

That was the ethos. You made what you could of what was available and you didn't make excuses. Blumberg [illegible] excuse, and it [illegible] Moines courtroom on January days that a jury member described to me as "cold as Sam Scratch," before a judge with a wintry expression named Harold D. Vietor, pronounced Vee-AY-ter, and inevitably nicknamed Darth.

Every day at the trial Stephen Blumberg had worn the same outfit: a red pullover sweater he'd gotten at the Disabled Veterans thrift shop over a Victorian-style undershirt a friend had sewn for him. His hair was tousled and he slumped in his chair. By one account he showed no expression the whole time, except at the sentencing, when his eyes bugged out. There's a laconic midwesternism for eccentrics of Blumberg's cast. They're "different," an epithet that says everything that needs to be said. Compared with their client, Blumberg's attorneys were only slightly different. Don Nickerson is a black man from Delaware, an Episcopal minister's son with a brooding aspect and a reputation for defending underdogs. He quarreled with his unruly client over a proposed plea-bargain agreement that Blumberg refused to accept, making it necessary to bring in as co-counsel, three weeks before trial, Raymond Rosenberg, a skin-

Blumberg took the bill and folded it,
and with a rapid movement of his thumbnail picked out the eye. He
flicked it to the floor and smoothed the bill on the knee of his khaki pants
The hole was neat and perfect

❧

After I left the prison late that afternoon, I went into Yankton to buy art supplies. The trial transcripts said Blumberg liked to draw, so I thought I'd get him to draw when I returned the next day. Downtown, Christmas music played from tinny speakers at the tops of the streetlight poles. The town seemed to be waging a grim war of upbeat entrepreneurialism against reality. The *Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan* carries a logo on the front page saying it's printed with soy ink. The Happy Chef next to my motel charged the day's temperature for a cup of coffee. When I'd said, "How are you doing?" that day to a farmer, he'd

ny elderly Jew with a civil-liberties background

The prosecution was *not* different. Linda Reade grew up in South Dakota and has a midwestern look. She's an attractive woman, with a degree of sophistication. But there's



ping off the Looney Birds' amplifiers?

The government's case derived its emotional force from the librarians Reade assembled. They were enraged. From the stand, they would try to look Blumberg in the eye. The climax of the case came when Susan Allen, then of Claremont, took the stand and held up the Nuremburg Chronicle of 1493, assessed at $35,000, the single most valuable volume in Blumberg's collection, and lovingly described the book's significance in our cultural passage from handwritten documents to printed ones. The book was the first printed text to be so heavily illustrated. It was thought that, as an apprentice, Albrecht Dürer had cut one of its blocks. The volume was left on a table, and at a break following Allen's testimony the judge got down from the bench to look at it. Judges and clerks came in from other courtrooms to see it, too. People were afraid to touch it.

Allen had written, in *AB Bookman*, that Blumberg should "hang by the neck." It disturbed her that people used the term "bibliomaniac" to describe him—"bibliomaniac" elevated Blumberg. She explained to me that the word should be applied to "someone who cares intensely for books, respects the law, and sees to it when they die that books are given to an institution that will care for them. Maybe the

As a teenager in Minneapolis, Blumberg started breaking into condemned buildings and taking out hardware. By the time the FBI caught up with him, thirty years later, he had accumulated 50,000 doorknobs

don't spend money on anything other than books, but they do it legally."

Reade adopted this thinking in fashioning his legal argument. "People initially wanted to glamorize Blumberg and make the public think, Oh, he was obsessed with books and there was something noble [about it]," she told me. "Well, there wasn't anything noble, he was a thief." After the trial, Susan Allen wrote that Reade deserved praise for removing "the clouds of romance and sympathy" from Blumberg.

The problem with this argument is that it's too cut-and-dried. Bibliomania isn't a passion, it's an obsession, a madness. Even "good" bibliomaniacs have struggled with that awareness

Some of my very best customers are crazy. They
hese things," says Glen Dawson, a Los Angeles
on for the court.

Stephen Blumberg's family had a history of in-
nity. As the defense brought out at the trial, two
f his cousins had been hospitalized for mental ill-
ess. And after a number of miscarriages and the
eath of her
eanne, had lost her tether on reality. She was giv-
n to violent outbursts, attacking her husband
ith a knife and burning her son's collection of
ld 78s and his Victrola. She
eached into a neighbor's goldfish bowl and
rushed the fish with her hands. Stephen's fa-
her also suffered from depression.

By the age of fifteen, Stephen Blumberg was
lready "different." He was withdrawn, main-
aining close relationships with elderly relatives,
specially his grandmother and great-aunt. He
ked the smell of the old ladies' houses; he liked
ld things. As he got older, he developed feel-
ngs for old architecture. It was the Sixties, and
Minneapolis and St. Paul were embarking on a
reat project of urban renewal and freeway build-
ng. Interstates 94 and 35 meet in the Twin
Cities, forming a thick sunken braid through
eighborhoods that date to the nineteenth cen-
ury. Hundreds of old Victorian buildings were
ondemned, boarded up, and demolished to
nake way for the interstates, and few people
eemed to grasp the treasure that was being lost.
Blumberg understood. A magazine about preser-
ation published two of his precise and obsessive
rchitectural drawings. More frequently his tal-
nts found lawless expression. He started break-
ng into condemned buildings and taking out
ardware. By the time the FBI caught up with
im, thirty years later, he had
0,000 doorknobs.

A scrawny, introverted rich sixteen-year-old
who combed abandoned inner-city buildings,
Blumberg now began forming relationships with
ow-life characters, including a convict twice his
ge. Dr. Blumberg learned as much when he
pened a letter his son had received from the
ounty jail.

"I innocently enough put him in a detention
enter," Dr. Blumberg told me by phone from
t. Paul. The children's-court judge ordered the
oy to see a psychiatrist, who said he was schizo-
hrenic. So the Blumbergs sent Stephen to Men-
inger for two weeks of tests, in July 1965. Two
f three doctors echoed the earlier diagnosis.

The Menninger visit was part of a hegira of hos-
italizations across the Midwest: Harding in Ohio,
t. Mary's and Anoka State Hospital, both in
Minnesota. "The grim bin," Blumberg called these
laces when I saw him that first day in Yankton.



Once, at Anoka, they put him in
solitary. Eventually he escaped,
fleeing to Chicago.

By his early twenties, Blum-
out of mental hospitals, but
more and more he lived in the
past. Family wealth gave him
derwear of the sort worn in
the nineteenth century. Dur-
tographs of old people that he displayed in his
house, telling visitors they were his ancestors.

One psychiatrist told Henry Blumberg that
his son's case was a tragedy. The boy was so gift-
ed, but his gifts had been plowed under.

Dr. Blumberg told me, "I've protected this kid
for so damn long, I've been in essence taking
care of him for twenty-five years." He spent
$350,000 on the defense of his son, including ex-
pert testimony from William Logan, who is a
leading expert on insanity and the law.

Logan examined Blumberg for thirty-three
hours. He found that he could describe the things
could even talk about the smell of the rugs,"
Logan testified. He told the court the boy's iden-
tity had become so intertwined with his father's
which his father hurt him, by helping to force
him from his beloved brick mansion, for in-
stance.

"His father, while appearing supportive, will do
something quite hostile to Stephen. Stephen
cannot quite incorporate that and will then be-
gin to focus away from his father on to more ab-
stract ideas, such as the government," Logan
said.

I'd glimpsed that anger in the moments when
Stephen Blumberg snarled and his face con-
torted.

As I read over my notes of the trial in Yank-
to howl over the landscape like a wind. A tri-
al was such a crude reduction of the human
condition. The law was interested in one ques-
tion only: was Blumberg guilty of a crime? Be-
yond that it didn't venture. Yet there the deeper

Not that Blumberg's romancers have done
much better. "He's my Al Capone, I love him,"
Huntsberry told me. "Jesse James without the vi-
olence," said Ray Cornell, the private investi-


Door
Knob
Set

"He was smarter than I am, sarcastic and at Blumberg. "He was too smart to become [illegible] his track. I felt he knew what he was doing every inch of the way.



was a paranoid delusion—that the government was watching him. Blumberg knew very well that he was breaking the law, but he saw his crimes as part of a moral crusade.

That distinction escaped the jurors. "I thought, Why did he have to steal if he had that much money," Hubbard told me. Just the same, some of Blumberg's supporters say he was lucky to lose. Had he won the insanity defense he could have been sent away to a mental facility until Judge Vietor ruled that he posed no danger to himself or others. "There was a tussle about what the hell was worse for Stephen," Raymond Rosenberg, one of his other attorneys, told me. "Because he could very well have been confined for the rest of his life. On the other hand, he didn't want to go to the penitentiary."

After the trial, Blumberg tried to demonstrate his contrition by helping the FBI figure out where the books had come from. He'd forgotten where he got a lot of them, but the effort weighed in his favor. Judge Vietor sentenced Blumberg to seventy-one months in prison and a $200,000 fine. The judge had rejected both Reade's recommendation of ten years in prison and the defense's request that Blumberg be sent to a psychiatric facility. He did say that Blumberg had "mental and emotional problems" and should get psychiatric counseling in prison. Steve Blumberg told me he wasn't getting any.

As for the books, the FBI ended up sending about 11,500 of the 18,900 it had seized to Dr. Blumberg, there being no hard evidence that they had been stolen. Only about 3,000 could be returned to libraries, in what proved to be a massive undertaking. By that time the dollar value of the theft had also dwindled. Glen Dawson, the Los Angeles book dealer, said the books were not worth more than $3 million. ("That hit Reade the wrong way; she was trying to get the value up," he says.)

The FBI has stored Blumberg's collection in a warehouse in Omaha, and before it was emptied I arranged to see the books. It was a brick two-story building in a commercial suburba section of Omaha. Above the door, gold rhon bold stickum numerals said 8631F. Inside we about seven warrenlike rooms crammed wit gray steel shelves. The books looked sad ther slumped on the shelves—Steve Blumberg wou have said as much. The impression of anoth writer on bibliomania, two hundred years befo me, suddenly seemed fresh: "I am ready to fai on the stair case from a strong smell of moro co leather." You could smell the falling-apa paper too.

Blumberg's handiwork was all over the book He'd [illegible] all the identifying perforatio marks libraries had made on the title page, but i one case he'd left them where they intersecte the words "From the Secretary of War," makir notches in the white spaces between the words saw smears on the spines where, dipping his thum in a little bottle of paint stripper, he'd wiped c the call numbers painted by librarians. I saw th fake call numbers he had affixed to the spin and the University of Minnesota bookplates h had glued into the front covers.

There was an otherworldliness there, the dee er you sank into Stephen Blumberg's collectio Colored plates from explorers. Maps of Amer can cities circa 1850. Endless descriptions of I dians, their customs and conditions. "Doubtf

Though we say we prize books for their literary content, they are also fetishes, high-culture fetishes but fetishes just the same. You don't have to read them to invoke them. You can touch them or smell them, ruffle their pages

plaintive voices," read one heading in an ove sized book dealing with Indian languages. I sa one of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's studies of I dians with the perforation stamp MASSACHUSET over and over again on its leaves. *American I dividualism*, by Herbert Hoover. A lithograph Indians on horseback. *History of the Conspira of Pontiac*. A massive Latin volume from 154 *Liber Pontificalis*. *Land of Sunshine*, from Ukia California, 1898.

I was back in Blumberg's world, a cacophon of forgotten voices telling a story about a sir pler, orderly past. "What I think motivates ma people who assiduously collect books is the id of making the world whole again," Glen

Horowitz, a Manhattan book dealer, had told me ack in New York. Great collections are organ- he said; neighboring books relate to one an- ther, one volume refers to another, they can be ought of as conducting a conversation. And a ry private one. These are not Matisses shout- g out their dollar value from the walls. Seated a dark office lined from floor to ceiling with ooks, Horowitz said that ook collectors tend to be ivate people who build idiosyncratic world to hich they retreat by emselves, "as often as t with a glass of whiskey hand."

I couldn't wait to get t of the warehouse. It as a dead place, redolent Blumberg's inability to ngage with life. His house ad been a place of suffo- ating clutter. Materialism a kind of soul sickness, a piritual condition as uch as an earthly one. one of us is immune. oss comes with being hu- an, and the act of having n seem to fill that empti- ess, because things are ore enduring and reli- ble than people, and be- use they take on hard ersonality. Stephen Blum- erg felt a greater sense of loss than most. His fam- y was a nightmare. He'd never been able to accept at the people he was closest to in life had also be- rayed him. He needed something to take him way.

Though we say we prize books for their literary ontent, they are also fetishes, high-culture fetish- s but fetishes just the same. Huntsberry, the for- er lounge act now working the night shift, had lt their power in an instant. You don't have to ead them to invoke them. You can touch them r smell them, ruffle their pages. Quicker than a ong, they connect you with the lost spirits.

For a while I was permanently with a lead briefcase, to get past the scanners. I lined one with lead, but then it started to fall apart with books in it."

Blumberg chuckled and ipped from his seltzer.

"I should have done more with copper," he aid. "Seen how thin you could get the sheet- ng."

The prisoner kept asking me what I intended to do with his drawings. I said the only thing I'd Dom Nickerson, his lawyer, had said about him: you agreed on something one minute, and an wasn't in people, it was in things.

I began getting my papers together. Blumberg



from the Ottumwa house

was as calm about my going as about anything else. It was Wednesday, and that night he'd be going to Gavel Club, a more ammunition about the government's meth ods. He talked to doctors who'd been convicted Dr. Logan had held out the hope that treatment would help dissolve the delusions that anchored choring them deeper. He was taking four news- papers in prison, and his biggest expenses were lot of letters, one lately to a youth whose name I'd seen it when I was in Ottumwa, where people were passing the letter around.

front lawn or even on the porch if your mice to grandpa + get hi all you want. I won't care or rat. . . . I want 1 thing for you to do for me though If I go out to UCLA + nail a $50,000 book + have it upstairs on my table you don't rat or care if I do OK?" he wrote. "Now Travis your thinking

why is this wierdo con who I never heard of writing me. Because I know you young guys are the only ones . . . that aint the cause of my prob-

After that letter, Blumberg said, the police had cut off his subscription to the *Courier*.

I said, "Steve, when do you cry?"

"Oh, I cried when I lost my house on Elliot," he said. "I cried on the phone to my father not long ago. . . . See, my dread is, he'll pass away before I get out of prison."

He asked if I thought he was insane, and I said, Yes, because his beliefs ran so counter to conventional understanding.

"Oh, yeah . . ." He nodded. "Well. You just haven't walked down the same paths as I have."

The calmness was exasperating. You wanted to

"What do you think, Steve? If you go to heaven, is God going to say you did a good thing, taking all those books?"

"Ummmm. I don't know. I don't know."

He clamped his dry lips and seemed to think about it. Feelings flitted through his eyes that he'd never let you in on.

"I think a lot of us are living our hell right here on earth," he said.

The next day I drove back to Des Moines and looked at the sidelights on the federal courthouse. It was astonishing how precisely Blumberg had gotten them, two years after his trial. The same went for the old house on Elliot Avenue in Minneapolis. He'd captured that just about perfectly

But Blumberg's most uncanny vision was for Grant Wood's Gothic House, the setting for the artist's famous portrait. The house is in Eldon, ten miles downriver from Ottumwa. Blumberg and I had looked at a photo of the place in *In Retrospect*, a history of Wapello County that Blumberg had asked me to bring to the prison. Fingering the photo, he'd said he'd always thought there was a step leading up to the porch. When I stopped in Eldon a couple of days later, two guys from the state were restoring the house. One of them led me through the icy mud. He said they were putting a step on the front that had been missing

After the stop in Eldon I drove back to Ottumwa to see about Blumberg's cars, as he'd asked

The deputy police chief, Wiltred Boettcher, a hale fellow, made me sit down while he called around making inquiries. He told me a joke. A ninety-year-old man decides he's going to move back to the old country. The paper sends a reporter over to find out why. "Well, when I came here they would hang the homosexuals," he said. "Then later they threw them in jail. Now the condone it. I'm leaving before they make i mandatory." Boettcher laughed hard, and I wen along with it.

After that he sent me to the city sanitaria on the first floor. Red-haired Jody Gates had th file on the cars. It said Henry Blumberg arrange to have them towed away after the Health De partment notified him that they were a nuisanc during Operation Junk Motor Vehicle in 1991. I was the same story at the *Ottumwa Courier*. Th police hadn't cut off Blumberg's subscription; D Blumberg had. "He said it upsets his son too muc to get the paper," said someone in circulation (Later Dr. Blumberg confirmed this.)

Only when I got back to New York and talke to my editor did I realize how odd it was that I' gone haring around doing errands for a prisone Stephen Blumberg had gotten under my skin But then, any authority Blumberg confronted h sought to subvert, and authorship is a form of au thority. It was one reason the librarians reacted th way they did; Blumberg was a shadow librarian His collection mocked their calling. "Are w brothers, Stephen and I, fellow collectors be neath the obvious distinction of thief and li brarian?" Harvard's Stoddard had wondered writing in the *Bulletin du Bibliophile*.

When I ran errands for him, Blumberg wa taking over the power of authorship.

It was easy to see what theme he would assig to this article. My assignments in Ottumwa al had a moral point. Geib, Andersen, the news paper: these were tales of narrow small-towner persecuting someone who was different. "I' like to know how [they] . . . feel about Stev Blumberg as Mr. Neighbor," Blumberg ha charged me in his letter. Later, face to face, h had filled in that story of the Midwest. He' talked about Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg Ohio*, as a criticism of Main Street, and he knev that *The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* wa a satire of western boosterism. He pressed me t read *Peculiar Treasure*, the autobiography o Jewish writer Edna Ferber, in which she spok of being branded a "sheeny" in Ottumwa, he hometown.

He understood that Grant Wood's *America Gothic* was laced with disdain. "Yeah! Sweet mid western America," he warbled.

But that wasn't the story, not Main Street o Grant Wood. Stephen Blumberg would have t stick with his own form of authorship. And ther it was, his creation, the time machine he'd pu together on North Jefferson Street for the FB to finish off, a hot empty house lined with emp ty bookshelves, its windows showing black ply wood to the world. Blighted talent builds manson of rage.

IS THERE A DOCTRINE IN THE HOUSE?

A year ago, when President Clinton took office, the job of directing "the world's only superpower" seemed an easy one. The phrase promised a global Pax Americana: history was at an end, what remained to be done was routine police work. That rosy scenario, however, was soon overtaken by events, and the White House, without a compass for the new world, has found itself lurching from crisis to crisis, changing strategies with each set of map coordinates.

Amid the flurry of policy shifts, high-level contradictions, and official "clarifications," scant attention has been given to the primary questions of American foreign policy: Should our dealings with other nations be governed by Wilsonian moral precepts or by a strict calculation of interests? How much are we willing to sacrifice to support democracy and human rights in other nations? What, in the end, are our responsibilities outside our borders? By way of encouraging President Clinton to at least consider, if not confront, the questions at hand, *Harper's Magazine* gathered six experts to give foreign-policy advice to a domestic-policy president.

The following forum is based on a discussion held at Le Mistral, a restaurant in Washington, D.C. Jack Hitt served as moderator.

JACK HITT

is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine.

KENNETH ANDERSON

is a lecturer at Harvard Law School, where he teaches the laws of war.

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN

teaches political philosophy at Vanderbilt University. She is the author of Women and War *and the co-author of* But Was It Just? *a reflection on the morality of the Persian Gulf war.*

KIM R. HOLMES

is the vice president and director of foreign policy and defense studies at the Heritage Foundation.

WILL MARSHALL

is the president of the Progressive Policy Institute. A former policy director of the Democratic Leadership Council, he is the co-editor of Mandate for Change, *a manifesto of the "New Democratic" ideas on which President Clinton campaigned.*

FRANK McCLOSKEY

represents the Eighth Congressional District in Indiana. A Democrat, he is a member of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

ARYEH NEIER

is the president of the Open Society Fund and a former executive director of Human Rights Watch and the American Civil Liberties Union.

JACK HITT: For the purposes of our discussion, let's imagine that I am President Clinton. I've gathered you here as my new team of national-security advisers to help me get out of the mess that I'm in. A year ago, I was inaugurated with a mandate from the American people to pay as little attention to foreign policy as possible. It seemed to work for a while, but then events in Bosnia, Somalia, Moscow, and Haiti made that position untenable. It's been said that my foreign policy is confused because no one knows what America stands for in 1994. Has the time come for me to articulate a clear strategy—a "Clinton Doctrine"—to guide our behavior abroad?

JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN: No. The word "doctrine" implies a comprehensiveness for which we're not prepared. We haven't begun to take the measure of the post–Cold War world. After World War II we were able to talk about a Truman Doctrine [illegible] because it was easier then to perceive our interests and concerns.

WILL MARSHALL: I would agree that the international picture is just too inchoate for something as rigid as a Clinton Doctrine. But I would argue that you, as president, have already articulated a general foreign-policy framework—elevating commerce to a strategic interest, revamping our military to meet new threats, and reinforcing the global movement toward democracy and markets. You *have* a policy; it's just that the problems cropping up in the daily headlines don't fit neatly into it.

ELSHTAIN: I disagree. All you and your advisers have been able to come up with is "enlargement"—and that's a nostrum, not a strategy. Of *course* America is in favor of the expansion of democracy and free markets. It's like saying the pope ought to be Catholic.

KIM HOLMES: The reason you should not have a doctrine, Mr. President, is that there isn't a single idea that encapsulates all the diverse problems at large in the world. "Containment" worked after World War II because it perfectly melded a concept—a way to see the world—with a guide for action. Now we must be content with setting priorities among our interests and stating which regions of the world are important to us and which are not.

ARYEH NEIER: What I would propose, instead of a policy based only on "interests," is that you issue a "minimum articulation of principles."

HITT: What should those be?

NEIER: Most basically, certain extremities of suffering inflicted by leaders on their own populations, or on the populations of other countries, will not be tolerated. Of course, we have to ac-

cept our limits and recognize that by intervening we may make a bad situation worse. But if the suffering extends to crimes against humanity on a gigantic scale, the United States will consider that it has a responsibility to try to alleviate the situation.

HOLMES: The essential division in the debate over American foreign policy has always been between a national-interest approach and a humanitarian approach. We Americans find it difficult to navigate between these two poles, because we confuse our national interest with humanitarian concerns.

KENNETH ANDERSON: Or even invert them completely. Look at some recent positions taken by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. The bishops were hesitant about American involvement in the Gulf War, where we were clearly motivated by raw interests in a material sense. Then came Bosnia, where they endorsed military intervention precisely because they felt that there were *no* national interests at stake—only a humanitarian principle. It's a peculiarly American way to think.

HOLMES: And it never works in the real world. You can't get a consensus behind a strategy totally devoid of national interest. Not only that; I also think such a strategy is morally corrupt. The American government is elected to represent the interests and values of the American people. To pretend that foreign policy can operate without regard for our self-interest is a breach of the social contract between the U.S. government and the American people.

ELSHTAIN: It's a huge mistake to divorce considerations of national self-interest from ethical imperatives. Ethical imperatives historically have also been a part of our national interest. Max Weber made the observation a long time ago that if you have a policy of pure interest severed from ethics, it gets brutal and opportunistic too easily. And if you have policy that's too idealistic and severed from interests, it becomes naive and Utopian rather quickly. To bring these together in a fruitful mix—that's our challenge.

NEIER: What Kim is ignoring is the importance of leadership. Just because the current president tends to follow public opinion doesn't mean that's the way it has to be. When the Marshall Plan was proposed in 1947, it was supported by only about 10 percent of the American people. But the president led the public, through argument, to see that the Marshall Plan was in their self-interest. My premise—that what's needed is a statement of principles—is based on the idea that there is no fixed set of national interests.

ANDERSON: I would go even further. I believe that there are moments when it is appropriate, just, right, and defensible for one political community [illegible] national-interest calculation at all, out of pure altruism, [illegible] argue, is such a case.

ELSHTAIN: There's nothing but trouble in that position, Ken. Pure altruism is notoriously difficult to articulate in foreign policy [illegible] into moralistic posturing. What [illegible] essarily what's pure.

ANDERSON: But I hold it out there because I [illegible] want to be in a position where we should [illegible] try—of always trying to translate our actions in to some kind of national-interest talk. The result

CONFLICTS IN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST
(with 1992 fatalities)

GEORGIA (N.A.)

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA (120,000–220,000)

[illegible]

[illegible]

U.N. PRESENCE

of that is a confusion of altruism and self-interest, which does neither any good.

HOLMES: Our foreign policy works best when our altruistic instincts and national interests coincide. The Cold War made that marriage easy: our strategic interest—preventing the domination of Europe by the Soviet Union—went along well with the principles of promoting democracy and freedom in Eastern Europe. Now that the Cold War is over, we have a divorce between two sides of our brain. One half is thinking strategically; the other, in terms of humanitarian goals.

NEIER: I don't agree that our interests and principles necessarily conflict. In many cases, they still coincide.

HELT: Give me a [illegible] that coincides with our national interest.

NEIER: Halting genocide, for one. Genocide is [illegible] ably the greatest crime in the human lexicon. And in Bosnia, for instance, our principle of preventing genocidal conduct converges with our interest in order and stability.

ELSHTAIN: We have another interest in halting genocide: for us to do nothing in the face of activities that violate so fundamentally the principles that we stand for erodes our credibility in the international arena.

[illegible]

TOWARD

mestic priority are one and the same: reviving our economy. . . . I will elevate economics in foreign policy, create an Economic Security Council . . . and change the State Department's culture so that economics is no longer a poor cousin to old school

—Bill Clinton, August 13, 1992

[Seeking a multilateral consensus is] a form of leadership that's quite appropriate at the moment. . . . We don't have the influence [to act unilaterally]. We don't have the inclination to use military force. We certainly don't have the money.

—Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Peter Tarnoff, May 25, 1993

There will be many occasions when we need to bring pressure to bear on the belligerents of the post–Cold War period and use our influence to prevent ethnic and other regional conflicts from erupting. But usually we will not want to act alone.

— Madeleine Albright, U.S. ambassador to the U.N., week of June 7, 1993

The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies.

I see four components to a strategy of enlargement. First, we should strengthen the community of major market democracies—including our own—which constitutes the core from which enlargement

Second, we should help foster and consolidate new democracies and market economies, where possible, especially in states of special significance and

Third, we must counter the aggression—and support the liberalization—of states hostile to democ-

Fourth, we need to pursue our humanitarian agen-

to help democracy and market economies take root in regions of greatest humanitarian concern.

National Security Adviser Anthony Lake,

HITT: So as president, I should state to the world that genocide is a crime of such magnitude that America is ready to commit blood and treasure to prevent it?

ELSHTAIN: Force isn't the only answer. Often all one can do is say: That's unacceptable. And sometimes intervention can do more harm than good. But you don't want to have a case-by-case foreign policy if it means that you'll ignore genocide over here but not over there. There have to be some standards.

FRANK MCCLOSKEY: I agree. Halting genocide has to be stated as an absolute principle. That being said, we cannot commit American lives to every instance of genocide. We have to look at each situation, especially in those places where we have leverage. For example, we can't send troops into Tibet and stop Chinese genocide there. But we could have—and should have—taken a more aggressive stance in the Balkans.

HOLMES: But that's precisely the problem with elevating any humanitarian principle to a foreign-policy goal: as soon as you state it, you have to start issuing exceptions. In foreign policy, you have to abandon the world of pure moral ideas, where consistency is effortless, for the practical world of international relations, where hypocrisy comes easy. The difference between what we say and what we do is that the former is unlimited and the latter is not.

NEIER: There *is* a value in saying that the United States will strive mightily to stop the commission of genocide. But precisely what we should do in trying to carry that out depends on the situation.

MCCLOSKEY: Exactly. We state opposition to genocide as an absolute principle. Then we look to our resources, ability, power, and leverage. Sure, there's a political component in all this. We cannot say we are going to intervene everywhere, but neither can we say we won't intervene anywhere. That's not hypocrisy. It's reality.

MARSHALL: That's why we're so baffled in Bosnia. The war there tortures us because it touches upon the tension between our broad principles and a tempering sense of national interest. Is the slaughter in Bosnia so horrible that America is willing to pay in blood to stop it? No. It rises almost to that threshold, but it doesn't get over it. That's why we've held back.

MCCLOSKEY: But the situation in the Balkans is not simply a question of humanitarian principle. Although the Clinton Administration refuses to admit it—even after all my formal requests—it's also very much a matter of international strategic interest. As Senator Joe Biden has said, the security and stability of Europe are in our interest. Look, this war may be off the front page right now, but it could heat up again tomorrow. There are 200,000 dead.

there are 1 million refugees. Germany alone has 500,000. There is potential spillover into Greece, Turkey, Albania, Bulgaria.

MARSHALL: That kind of talk is very troubling to me. The reason I held out the possibility of a purely altruistic intervention was precisely to avoid sounding like the congressman, who is straining to squeeze Bosnia under the rubric of American interests. I, too, would have intervened—though only with NATO—on the ground in Bosnia, but I would have done so for purely humanitarian reasons, and I would have said so. If you try to tell Europeans that they're not capable of understanding their own interests, you wind up sounding ludicrous. True, the Germans have had to take in a lot of refugees. But they don't seem sufficiently worried about that fact to intervene in Bosnia. It is preposterous to lecture Europeans about *their* interests. If you muddy the distinction between interests and values, you end up, like Joe Biden, expressing outrage over "moral rape" in Bosnia and proposing intervention because, on some level, you need to shore up your women's vote. Biden is now in the position, in effect, of saying that we ought to intervene in Bosnia because he's unhappy about the prevalence of rape in America or the way Anita Hill was treated in the Senate.

HOLMES: During the Cold War, the United States paid attention to Yugoslavia because we feared what the Soviets might do there. That consideration is completely absent now. You have refugees, you have regional instability, and you have a human tragedy. But that is not the sort of large and strategic interest that compelled us to join NATO and threaten thermonuclear war to protect Europe from the Soviet Union.

MARSHALL: Wait a minute, Kim. Who defines a nation's interest? My problem with foreign-policy realists is that they arrogate to themselves the



the national interest is a complex calculation. pressed not to listen. I disagree with Kim; I don't think there has to be a so- ple think that we should intervene to That's a worthy and enlightened impulse. But in each case, we have to calibrate the costs.

defined by television. Let me give you an example. In Angola, a half million people have been killed in war since the fall of 1992. That's an incredible human tragedy. But we're not talking about Angola like we're talking about Bosnia. Why is that? Is the suffering of an Angolan less acute than the suffering of a Bosnian? What about Tajikistan? There's a terrible war going on there. More than 30,000 people were killed in 1992 alone. It's absolutely brutal. But CNN can't get its cameras in, and therefore it's not on our global radar screen. To me, a policy defined by what people see on TV is the least moral position there is. If morality is not applied consistently, it becomes



HITT: In my role as president, I want to address the country about my newfound commitment to foreign policy and to define what our national interest is. What do I say are the interests and principles of American foreign policy?

weapons of mass destruction. Second, assistance

priorities and what Will has said.

MARSHALL: That's not true: I don't rule out intervention for humanitarian reasons, if that's what the American people decide to do. I don't insist on some narrowly defined national interest as a criterion. In fact, I think this choice between interests and principles is a false one. I also suspect I am more sanguine than Kim about the possibility of advancing U.S. interests through multilateral means and the prospect of reviving collective-security agreements.

HOLMES: The other difference between Will and me is that I worry every time the President is asked what we stand for, because the first word out of his mouth—and I'm sure it makes Will happy—is "democracy."

HEIT: Well, forty years of containment taught him to say that.

HOLMES: Then we have a hangover, don't we? It's time to start talking differently.

MARSHALL: Kim, two hundred years of American history taught him to say that word.

HOLMES: Not true. Democracy was not the key issue of the American Revolution. Liberty was.

ANDERSON: This is interesting. You admit that "democracy" is a bit of language we use to speak about something else—call it "interests." But Will, too, uses it to signify a deeper set of convictions that is really more about capitalism and [illegible] the good of expressing oneself through the purchase of consumer goods that, it is hoped, promote peace by promoting universal consumer values.

ELSHTAIN: That's "enlargement" for you. It's too murky.

ANDERSON: But, Jean, it's not murky for people like Will. It's pure Clintonism: foreign policy as a sort of therapy. The City on the Hill goes out into the world not to make it a better place, or even a safer one, but to feel good about itself. That's why this administration is so happy with symbolic actions in places like Bosnia [illegible] communism left lib- [illegible] for that matter. We didn't create this situation. The Eastern European revolts were indigenous. People are suddenly deciding on their own that [illegible] lead to a better life—whether they're inspired

HEIT: So we'll defend democracy in Russia but not [illegible] It's just down around number ten.

ANDERSON: What I find curious, Kim, is that I can't really see any difference between your listing of [illegible]

THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: A BRIEF HISTORY

The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. . . . Our detached and distant [illegible] [our own] course. . . . Why forgo the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground?

Farewell Address, 1796

The American continents, by the free and independent [illegible] maintained, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.

Monroe Doctrine, 1823

I am proposing, as it were, that the nations should with one accord adopt the doctrine of President Monroe as the doctrine of the world: that no na-

new order on liberal, democratic principles.

ELSHTAIN: I get nervous, Will, when I hear talk of a liberal world order.

HOLMES: No kidding. The fact is, democracy is *not* the new organizing order. Mr. President, if I were your secretary of state, I'd tell you that in deciding our foreign policy for a certain country, the question is not whether that country is democratic but whether it has a pro-Western foreign policy. In Asia, you have countries that are pro-Western but not necessarily democratic. I was just in China, and it's clear that in the next ten or fifteen years the People's Republic will evolve into an authoritarian mix of capitalism and socialism. It's not going to be democratic. It's going to be increasingly capitalist.

ELSHTAIN: Talk of a homogeneous liberal world order strikes me as another nostrum along the lines of enlarging free markets. It pushes a universalism of the sort we should stay away from. We should acknowledge that there exist certain minimal standards beneath which our concern kicks in, but there is a big difference between situations in which people are being systematically slaughtered, populations transported, or victims sent to death camps, and cultural practices we don't agree with, such as women wearing a chador or undergoing clitoridectomy—practices that women in these societies often support and enforce.

HOLMES: Let us not forget that we intervened against Adolf Hitler not because of the Holocaust but because he invaded France.

NEIER: Yes, but the lesson of that war was the need for international institutions to ensure that a holocaust did not occur again. We created these institutions and adopted in their name a variety of agreements. We have been moving in a certain direction. Now, though, these international institutions are frayed, and we have a definite national interest in making them work.

ANDERSON: The reason they are frayed is precisely because of the imperial overreach that comes with imagining that the United Nations will enforce some kind of a pax romana.

HOLMES: Am I the only one at the table who doesn't really know what the "world community" is? I know there are United Nations declarations. But I defy anyone to state even the lowest common denominator.

ANDERSON: It's worse than that. Communities are defined by setting themselves apart from other communities around them. There won't be a "world community" until the day the Vulcans arrive in our skies and invite us to join the United Federation of Planets. Only then will we know our common elements as a world community.

NEIER: In the past, empires were mechanisms for maintaining a certain degree of order. At this moment, we have no empire. But we do have international institutions that are trying to put such an order, and we have a definite national interest in making them work.

ELSHTAIN: In a lot of what we've just heard, I can hear a certain nostalgia for empire. We want it to be a nice empire, a benevolent empire, maybe even—I hate to saddle you with this, Will—a liberal world order. But there are ways to promote Aryeh's or Will's notion of order without these nostalgic longings for a supranational power.

MARSHALL: If you want to build a consensus for internationalism, you must ground your foreign policy in the sentiments of the public. You're going to have to tell people that we're trying to create the world we would all like to live in, which is a world that is liberal in the sense that there are norms and values that are transcendent. We don't want everything to look like the United States. But there's no reason why you can't have national distinctiveness within an increasingly liberal and democratic framework. The end of the Cold War means that our democratic convictions and our interests are more likely to converge than ever. The record of this century is that democracies don't go to war with each other. They are less likely to sponsor terrorism, flout human rights, and violate nonproliferation treaties. Aiding Russia's transition to democracy—which the Clinton administration has forcefully pushed—is not just an expression of our deepest values; it's an urgent security imperative.

HOLMES: If promoting democracy produces a pro-Western foreign policy, then we should do it. But there are many countries in Asia and the Middle East where promoting democracy is *not* a good idea right now.

NEIER: So we shouldn't promote democracy in Indonesia, or Singapore, or Malaysia, or China?

HOLMES: Or Saudi Arabia.

NEIER: So you're saying that America's foreign policy should be: If you're pro-Western, you're entitled to be as authoritarian and abusive as you want?

HITT: Kim, can you imagine a situation in which you'd recommend a humanitarian policy that would conflict with a national interest?

HOLMES: Probably not. If you want me to support some political group in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia that happens to be the latest cause célebre of Amnesty International, I would not cut all ties

IF WE JUST GIVE OUR ALLIES A DEMOCRACY TEST, WE'LL END UP CRITICIZING LEADERS WE SHOULD SUPPORT, LIKE YELTSIN

[redacted] Saudi Arabia, just because of human-rights concerns. Those countries are allies of ours that have, for us, a larger strategic purpose.

MCCLOSKEY: Kim, you don't favor democracy in Saudi Arabia, but you listed "democracy in Russia" as your second most important goal. Yeltsin has [redacted] Parliament, rounded up people and suspended the press. Is your goal there really democracy, or is it merely to accelerate capitalism?

HOLMES: It depends on what kind of foreign policy Russia has. It just so happened that Yeltsin's enemies in Parliament were anti-Western. If Yeltsin creates some kind of Pinochet solution, where he becomes increasingly authoritarian but pro-market and continues a pro-Western foreign policy, then we should continue to support him. See, if we just give our allies a democracy test, we'll wind up hypocrites, and in Yeltsin's case we'll wind up criticizing the only pro-Western Russian leader there is.

MCCLOSKEY: Wait a minute. Democracy is *not* going to be a priority, but relations with the West and accelerated capitalism *are*? That seems strange to me.

HOLMES: I'm saying that the promotion of a pro-Western foreign policy is the ultimate priority. If promoting democratic and reform elements inside Russia happens to be the way for us to reach that goal, then that's what we should do.

STAYING OFF THE FRONT PAGE

HEFT: My good friend James Carville came into the Oval Office the other day to talk about foreign policy. I told him I had McCloskey climbing up my back on Bosnia, calling for Warren Christopher's resignation. He advised that I get foreign affairs off the front page. Frankly, I don't want a front-page foreign policy. I want one that shows up on page A-16. How do I get it?

MCCLOSKEY: Can't be done. It's not an A-16 world right now, Mr. President.

HEFT: But it was for the first seven months of my administration.

HOLMES: Look what you did in Bosnia.

HEFT: I tried to play it down.

ELSHTAIN: No, at one point you were promising air strikes, remember? You more or less marched the army up and then back down again.

HOLMES: The roots of this dilemma go back to the campaign. What you did was outflank Bush on his right by being more internationalist with your Bosnia air strikes, your tough defense positions, and your China and Haiti policies. But those positions are coming back to haunt you.

ELSHTAIN: You may not be interested in foreign policy, Mr. President, but foreign policy's interested in you. The last thing you want to do is make the possibility of our commitment even more diffuse. Your speech on foreign policy needs to weave a clear articulation of principles and interests—all of which were outlined here in some fashion. Then you need to apply that guide to the world, because, in the end, the only way to keep foreign policy off the front page is to stop lurching from one crisis to the next. That is, the best way not to be overtaken by foreign policy is to have a foreign policy. ■

FOREIGN POLICY: THE GRASS-ROOTS APPROACH

In September, the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press polled 2,000 Americans for their views on U.S. foreign policy. Respondents were given a list of "possible long-range foreign-policy goals." The percentage of people who named each goal as a "top priority" is given below.

Protecting the jobs of American workers	85%
Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction	69
Insuring adequate energy supplies for the United States	60
Improving the global environment	56
Reducing our trade deficit with foreign countries	55
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AD INFINITUM: A SHORT STORY

By John Barth

At the far end of their lawn, down by the large pond or small marshy lake, he is at work in "his" daylily garden—weeding, feeding, clearing out dead growth to make room for new—when the ring of the telephone begins this story. They spend so much of their day outdoors, in the season, that years ago they installed an outside phone bell under the porch-roof overhang. As a rule, they bring a cordless phone out with them too, onto the sundeck or the patio, where they can usually reach it before the answering machine takes over. It is too early in the season, however, for them to have resumed that convenient habit. Anyhow, this is a weekday midmorning; she's indoors still, in her studio. She'll take the call.

The telephone rings a second time, but not a third. On his knees in the daylily garden, he has paused, trowel in hand, and straightened his back. He returns to his homely work, which he always finds mildly agreeable but now suddenly relishes: simple physical work with clean soil in fine air and sunlight. The call could be routine: some bit of business, some service person. In the season, he's the one who normally takes weekday-morning calls, not to interrupt her concentration in the studio, but it's not quite the season yet. The caller could be a friend—although their friends generally don't call them before noon. It could be a telephone solicitor: there seem to be more of those every year, enough to lead them to consider unlisting their number, but not quite yet to unlist it. It could be a misdial.

If presently she steps out onto the sundeck, looking for him whether or not [illegible] less phone it the call is [illegible] news, this story's beginning will have ended, its middle begun.

Presently she steps out onto the sundeck, overlooking their lawn and the large pond or small lake beyond it. She had been at her big old drafting table, working—trying to work, anyhow; pretending to work; maybe actually almost really working—when that phone call began this story. From her upholstered swivel chair, through one of the water-facing windows at her studio [illegible] could see him on hands and knees down in his daylily garden along the water's edge. Indeed, she had been more or less watching him, preoccupied in his old jeans and sweatshirt and gardening gloves, while she worked or tried or pretended to work at her worktable. At the first ring, she saw him straighten his back and square his shoulders, his trowel hand resting on his thigh top, and at the second (which she had waited for before picking up the receiver) look houseward and remove one glove. At the non–third ring, as she said hello to the caller, he pushed back his eyeglasses with [illegible] hand. She had continued then to watch him—returning to his task, his left hand still ungloved for picking out the weeds troweled up with his right [illegible] [illegible] news.

The news is bad indeed. Not quite so bad, perhaps, as her very-worst-case scenario, but considerably worse than her average-feared scenarios, and enormously worse than her best-case, hoped-against-hope scenarios. The news is of the sort that in one stroke eliminates all agreeable plans and expectations—indeed, all prospect of real pleasure—from the moment of its communication. In effect, the news puts a period to this pair's prevailingly happy though certainly

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ter's reception, that he cannot imagine a further delight in it, of the sort that they have been [illegible] with through their years together. All that is over now: for her already; for him [illegible] soon as she relays the news. For, which, of course, she must and promptly will.

Gone. Finished. Done with.

Meanwhile, *she* knows the news, but he does not, yet. From her worktable she sees him poke [illegible] mulch, with the point of his trowel and pinch out by the roots, with his ungloved other hand, a bit of chickweed, wire grass, or ground ivy. She accepts the caller's terse expressions of sympathy and daily expresses to him her appreciation for that unenviable bit of message-bearing. She has asked only a few questions—there won't many to be asked—and has attended the courteous, pained, terrible but unsurprising replies. Presently she replaces the cordless telephone on its base and leans back for a moment in her comfortable work chair to watch her mate at his ordinary, satisfying labor and to assimilate what she has just been told.

[illegible] assimilating what she has just been told—or, if there is, that assimilation is to be measured in years, even decades, not in moments, days, weeks, months, seasons. She must now get up from her chair, walk through their modest, pleasant house to the sundeck, cross the lawn to the daylily garden down by the lake or pond, and tell him the news. She regards him for some moments longer, aware that as he [illegible] certainly on the phone call. He will be wondering whether she's still speaking with the caller or has already hung up the telephone and is en route to tell him the news. Perhaps the call was merely a routine bit of business, not worth reporting until their paths recross at coffee break or lunchtime. A wrong number, even, it might [illegible] tor. He may perhaps be half-deciding by now that it was, after all, one of those innocuous pos-

[illegible] eyes, exhales, rises, and goes to tell

H[illegible] sundeck, and signals his whereabouts with a wave [illegible] down on his knees in the daylily garden. At that [illegible] sees, ref[illegible]

nothing [illegible] marshal, or one more canvasser. [illegible] has stepped from the deck and begun to cr[illegible] the lawn, himward, unurgently. He resumes w[illegible] ing out the wire grass that perennially inva[illegible] their flower beds, its rhizomes spreading un[illegible] the mulch, secretly reticulating the clean s[illegible] and choking the lily bulbs. A weed, he wo[illegible] agree, is not an organism wicked in itself; it's s[illegible] ply one of nature's creatures going vigorou[illegible] about its natural business in a place where [illegible] wishes that it would not. He finds something [illegible] pressive, even awesome, in the intricacy a[illegible] tenacity of those rhizomes and their interco[illegible] nections; uproot one carefully and it seems t[illegible] network the whole bed—the whole lawn, pro[illegible] ably. Break it off at any point and it redoubles [illegible] the monster Whatsitsname in Greek mythol[illegible] The Hydra. So it's terrible, too, in its way, as w[illegible] as splendid, that blind tenacity, that evolved p[illegible] sistence and virtual ineradicability, heedless[illegible] the daylilies that it competes with and vitiates, [illegible] different to everything except its mindless self-p[illegible] liferation. It occurs to him that, on the ot[illegible] hand, that same persistence is exactly what he d[illegible] tivates in their flowers, pinching back the rho[illegible] dendrons and dead-heading yesterday's lilies [illegible] encourage multiple blooms. An asset here, a [illegible] bility there, from the gardener's point of vi[illegible] while Nature shrugs its nonjudgmental sh[illegible] ders. Unquestionably, however, it would be [illegible] ter to raise a healthy crop of wire grass by weed[illegible] out the daylilies than vice versa.

With such reflections he distracts himself [illegible] tries or pretends to distract himself, as she st[illegible] unhurriedly from the sundeck and [illegible] gins to cross the lawn, himward.

She is, decidedly, in no hurry to cross [illegible] lawn and say what she must say. There is [illegible] mer best friend and companion, in his [illegible] nocent, agreeable work: half chore, half hob[illegible] a respite from his own busy professional life. A[illegible] prehensive as he will have been since the te[illegible] phone call, he is still *as if* all right; she, too, a[illegible] their life and foreseeable future—*as if* still [illegible] right. [illegible] she must cross the entire lawn, with its centu[illegible] cherry tree: a magnificently spreading, fully m[illegible] ture Kwanzan, just now at the absolute pink p[illegible] of its glorious bloom. About halfway betwe[illegible] the [illegible] Kwanzan cherry stand[illegible] younger and smaller, but equally vigorous, Zu[illegible] crab apple that they themselves put in a few s[illegible] sons past to replace a storm-damaged predec[illegible] sor. It, too, is a near-perfect specimen of its ki[illegible] and likewise at or just past the peak of its flo[illegible] [illegible] through the white clustered petals. To reach h[illegible]

y, really, whose widespread limbs they fear for summer thunder squalls. For her to reach that erry tree will take a certain small time: perhaps enty seconds, as she's in no hurry. To stroll surely even to the Zumi crab apple takes ten a dozen seconds—about as long as it takes to ad this sentence aloud. Walking past that per-ct crab apple, passing under that resplendent erry, crossing the remaining half of the lawn wn to the lily garden, and telling him the ws—these sequential actions will constitute the iddle of this story, already in progress.

In the third of a minute required for her to nble from sundeck to cherry tree—even in the zen seconds from deck to crab apple (she's pass-g that crab apple now)—her companion will ave weeded his way perhaps one trowel's length rther through his lily bed, which borders that rticular stretch of pond- or lakeside for sever-yards, to the far corner of their lot, where the ods begin. Musing upon is circumstance—a re-ex of insulation, perhaps, om the devastating news -puts her in mind of eno's famous paradox of chilles and the tortoise. wift Achilles, Zeno teas-, can never catch the tor-ise, for in whatever short me required for him to ose halt the hundred rds between them, the ggish animal will have oved perhaps a few inch-; and in the very short me required to halve that maining distance, an ch or two more, et cetera -ad infinitum, inasmuch finite distances, howev-small, can be halved for-ver. It occurs to her, deed—although she is either philosopher nor athematician—that her sband needn't even nec-ssarily be moving away om her, so to speak, as she passes now under the credibly full-blossomed canopy of the Kwanzan erry and pauses to be quietly re-astonished, if arcely soothed, by its splendor. He (likewise eno's tortoise) could remain fixed in the same ot; he could even rise and stroll to meet her, *run* meet her under that flowered canopy; in every se and at whatever clip, the intervening dis-nces must be halved, re-halved, and re-re-halved rever, ad infinitum. Like the figured lovers in eats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (another image om her college days), she and he will never touch, although unlike those, these are living people en route to the how many-thousandth tete a tete [illegible] must convey to him her happiness-ending news. In John Keats's words and by the terms of Zeno's paradox, *forever* will he love and she be fair. Forever they'll go on closing the distance between them—as they have in effect [illegible] any well-bonded pair, since Day One of their connection—yet never closing it altogether: asymptotic curves that eternally approach but never meet.



But of course they will meet, very shortly, and before even then they'll come within hailing distance, speaking distance, murmuring distance. Here in the middle of the middle of the story, as she re-emerges from under the canopy of cherry blossoms into the tender midmorning sunlight, an osprey suddenly plummets from the sky to snatch a small fish from the shallows. They both turn to look. He, the nearer, can see the fish flip vainly in the raptor's talons; the osprey aligns its prey adroitly fore and aft, head to wind, to minimize drag, and flaps off with it toward its rickety treetop nest across the pond or lake.

The fish is dying. The fish is dying. The fish is dead.

When he was a small boy being driven in his parents' car to something he feared—a piano recital for which he felt unready, a medical pro-

tioned the man's jeans, sweatshirt, gloves, an
eyeglasses, but nothing further of his appearance
age, ethnicity, character, temperament, and his
tory (other than that he once attended college
and (but for that same detail) nothing whateve
of hers; nor anything, really, of their life togeth
er, its gratifications and tribulations, adventure
large or small, careers, corner-turnings. Have the
children? Grandchildren, even? What sort
telephone solicitors disturb their evidently rura
e? What of their house's architecture an
furnishings, its past owners, if any, and the histor
of the land on which it sits—back to the la
glaciation, say, which configured "their" pond
lake and its topographical surround? Without ou
woman's pausing for an instant in her hasteless bu
steady course across those few remaining yards
lawn, the narrative of her final steps might su
pend indefinitely their completion. What variet
of grasses does that lawn comprise, interspers
with what weeds, habitating what Insecta, and vi
ited by what birds? How, exactly, does the sprin
air feel on her sober-visaged face? Are his muscl
sore from gardening, and, if so, is that degree
soreness, from that source, agreeable to him
otherwise? What is the relevance, if any, of the
uncertainty whether that water beyond their law
is properly to be denominated a large pond or
small lake, and has that uncertainty been a ru
ning levity through their years there? Is yonder
prey's nest truly rickety, or only apparently s
The middle of this story nears its end, but has n
reached it yet, not yet. There's time still, st
world enough and time. There are narrative po
sibilities still unforeclosed. If our lives are st
ries, and if this story is three-fourths told, it
not yet seven-eighths told; if seven-eighths, n
yet fifteen-sixteenths; et cetera, et cetera—a
meanwhile, meanwhile it is *as if* all were st

In non-narrated life, alas, it is a different st
ry, as in the world of actual tortoises, times, a
coastlines. It might appear that in Time's infin
sub-segmentation, 11:00 A.M. can never rea
can never reach the tortoise, nor any story its er
nor any news its destined hearer—yet reach
they do, in the world we know. Stories atta
their denouement by selective omission, as
real-world coastline measurements; Achil
swiftly overtakes the tortoise by ignoring t
terms of Zeno's paradox. Time, however, m
wonderful than these, omits nothing, igno
nothing, yet moves inexorably from hour
hour in just five dozen minutes.

The story of our life is not our life; it is our s
ry. Soon she must tell him the news.

Our lives are not stories. Now she must tell h

This story will never end. This story ends.

wife approaches from the cherry tree) appending

Distracted, he breaks off a wire-grass

"T

ing" it as in Keats's urn; we need only show it

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EROS AT SEA

Shipping out to see the world, but still seeing Sylvia

By Joel Agee



pregnancy or a miscarriage or a chemically induced abortion, I was never able to determine which, for the girl, and painful for me too, ed what all the inveiglements of her father confessor hadn't: pen- almost daily after-school trysts and tels, we had spent more time in sion for the rest of her life, I was den she was telling me in mad- deningly "reasonable" tones that it was really best if we parted, at least for a while, and that she would feel that way even if nothing had sex, sex, sex, and besides, I was just too ob pressively jealous. And as if that Vince in Albany was threatening to take me to court; she was a minor, I an adult.

So I went to the Scandinavian Ship- the plan of putting an ocean between us. But first I would make love to her one more time. I climbed the fire es- cape outside her window, knocked, but she wouldn't make love, not until she was at least sixteen, it would hurt duce her. She did not melt. I whis- pered my latest suspicion at her: that her mother's new tenant, that music student who had moved into the up- stairs bedroom, was screwing her, wasn't he, and all this pregnancy stuff think we both knew that I believed only a fraction of what I was say- ing, but I could not allow such a banal, no, such a mature inter- loper as common sense to take her away from me, it was too hu- miliating. This drama had to be played out by the rules of pas- sion. She denied my allegations. I returned to the window. She got out of bed, her face wet with tears, to prevent me from leaving in anger. She had only a T-shirt on. As a sign of her new chasti- ty, she pulled the hem down with one hand while with the other she reached out imploringly. "Stay!" Then the sound of steps in the hallway — her mother? the tenant? her mother? — propelled me down the fire escape. A few days later, I boarded the *Scan Seas*, a Swedish merchant ship bound for Australia, taking with me the memory of Sylvia—that was her name—in that final, am- biguous, ravishing pose.

I can imagine my reader wonder- ing: Who was this nymph, this Lolita how did she wreak such a spell, wha fifteen-year-old girl could drive a man across the oceans and half to distrac- tion? The question is natural, but it misses the mark. I'd met Sylvia when I was twenty, an immigrant, fresh off the boat in an ill-fitting East German suit, a virgin in every sense but the physical (thanks to a hasty transac- tion with a Mexican whore), and just beginning to ache my way through that awful spiritual dislocation for which "culture shock" would be the

ght term if it wasn't commonly used
efer to the discomfort of tourists.
t's say I was a misfit to the bones,
foundly anxious and carefully
sked. Now imagine a tall, clear-
ined, fair-haired girl with a sweet,
mn face stepping into that aching
d. She is only fourteen years old,
she looks like one of Botticelli's
alds of spring come to life, and
re is a depth in her eyes into which
gin to fall the moment I see her. A
uty, you say, but beauty explains
hing. What spoke to me from that
th was the void itself, but it was en-
led now, it no longer threatened, it
become a well of pure invitation
endless longing. The hellish dif-
ilty in loving her was that she was
young to have any sure sense of
at it was that made her so wrench-
gly beautiful to me. If I gazed into
eyes long enough, I could reflect
back to her. Invariably she was
htened and turned away. She tried
describe the feeling—a kind of ver-
o. What is vertigo but a foretaste of
lir g? Sometimes the same fear
lled up in her when we listened to
tain pieces of music together. But
ere was one plane on which we met
thout any barrier and on equal
ms, and that was her bed. There
invented each other. She was a
tural actress. Her sensuality was of
e imagination as much as of the
dy: "Let's be other people!" Her fa-
rite situation was a couple meeting
some forbidden zone of exquisite
ilt and enticement. Then, when
ssion took over and we were our-
ves again, it was like meeting anew.
ose depths she swam with all the
surance of genius. It was my love
at bewildered her, because what I
ved in her was asleep and protected
fear. And I was always luring her to
at edge, I wanted her to take the ir-
rievable step. She took refuge in
ief occasional flings with boys clos-
to her age, entirely appropriate un-
r normal circumstances, but our
rcumstances were not normal. She
s fifteen and the mistress of a twen-
-one-year-old man who had the sixth
nse of jealousy, which needs but a
nt to set the wheels of torment
lling. And I had more than hints.
e was perverse or careless enough to
ve evidence in places where I would
find it. That is how possessing and re-
possessing her became the obsession of
my days, and why, after losing her, I
was pursued by her memo-
ry for so long.

Shortly before the *Seven Seas* reached Panama, the third mate, who spoke excellent English, watched me attempting to tidy up the officers' dining room and remarked that I was taking my job title, "messboy," rather literally. He had a point. The officers were entitled to service at mealtimes, and I was feeding them annoyance. Not a day passed when one of them didn't have to complain that there was no salt in the shaker, or that the beer I had brought him was not the one he had ordered. "Ziss horse piss, not beer!" Halfway across the Pacific, they decided to fire me as soon as we reached Australia. The chief steward gave me their ultimatum. "You have one chance," he said. What was that? "No more mistakes." By the slant of his smile and the lift of his eyebrow I saw that he considered such a feat possible, though not likely. I tried. God knows I tried! At mealtimes, I observed in the eyes of my judges two opposing expressions: one distinctly malevolent, scowling look, as if waiting for the oversight that would release the catch on the guillotine; the other, a surprised and gratified look of pleasure at my unusual efficiency. Then the radio officer's wife (she had been hired to do the ship's laundry) told me that they were betting on me, a wager like Satan's with God over Job, to see if this servant was capable of perfection. I wanted badly to show them the measure of my contempt, some big gesture, like dumping the mashed potatoes on the tablecloth, but what good would that do me? On the other hand, what if they really did fire me? How would I get home without money? What would I do for work?

Cut brush in the outback?
I hunt kangaroos?

The day before we dropped anchor in Adelaide, the *Seven Seas* was adorned with flags to celebrate the first anniversary of her launching. The crew ate cardamom-flavored limpa bread, which was ordinarily served to the officers, and the officers ate cake. The crew consumed hundreds of gallons of beer, the officers drank [illegible]. After a meal a short, stern, bearded man in a white uniform with a white visored cap and white gloves [illegible] accompanied by the [illegible] introduced us individually to the officers' messboy [illegible] the name, meaning "Charlie," messboys are given on Swedish ships—"that is the captain." I was ready; the chief steward had forewarned me. No doubt he was betting on my success. Obsessively prompting, I had washed each fork, knife, and spoon three times over, checked the sink for suds and the glasses for thumbprints, the tile floor was a mirror, I had even scrubbed the outside of the porthole, which wasn't my job. But the captain did not even glance at this splendor. He strode through the pantry and stopped in front of the swinging door to the dining room. Was it clean? Yes, it was. He reached up to the top of the lintel, a surface I had never taken into consideration, stroked it lightly with one white-gloved finger, and showed me—dirt, swung open the door, and walked on. The chief steward gulped audibly. I went off to my cabin to pack my duffel bag.

That night a movie was shown outside, on the main deck. For about an hour, it dispelled my worries about what would become of me. The moon was full, the sea was calm. Because of the long distance between the officers' lounge, where the projector was set up, and the crew's cabins, where the screen was suspended, the image was immense. Was the ship's motor turned off? It seems unlikely, but as I remember it, we floated in a wonderful stillness. Every soul on the ship was assembled, from the oilers and deckhands on up to the officers and the captain—not to forget the radio officer's French wife, Marianne, the only woman on board, whose presence no doubt influenced the choice of films we were shown. After a countdown of squarish numbers ticking down its own time to nothing, the screen lit up with a black-and-white view of a bedroom furnished in the style of the early Fifties: next to the bed was a kidney-shaped night table, and above a dresser, in the center of the screen, a mirror framed with pale neon tubes. The door opened, a woman came in, turned around, forbade en-

You deserve a factual look at...

Jerusalem

Whose city—whose "holy city" is it ?

It's twenty five years, since Israel's victory in the Six-Day War, that the city of Jerusalem has been reunited under Israeli rule. But there is still much talk, and many people insist, that solution of the "Middle East Problem" will not be possible until Israeli Jews relinquish their "occupation" and restore the holy city--or, at the very minimum, its eastern part—to its "rightful owners", the Moslem Arabs.

What are the facts?

A city of many nationalities. Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, during which the Israeli Defense Forces reconquered Jerusalem from the Jordanians, claims to Jerusalem being a Moslem holy city were rarely, if ever asserted. Jerusalem had always been a city in which many religions and nationalities lived side by side. It was only after the old city was back in Jewish hands that the Moslem Arabs declared their willingness to wage "jihad" (holy war) to bring the city back into Arab possession.

> "Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years."

Islamic holy city has only come about in modern times, especially after the Arabs lost the city in the Six-Day War. It now has gained currency by dint of constant repetition. The basis for the claim is that Jerusalem does indeed contain an Islamic holy site, namely the Temple Mount (sacred to both Moslems and Jews) with its two mosques. It is the place from which Mohammed is believed to have ascended to heaven. Mohammed never set foot in Jerusalem. But aware that it was the holy city of Christians and Jews, and wishing to convert them to his new religion, he commanded his followers to build a mosque in Jerusalem. But never in Moslem history did this mosque compare in significance to the Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina - cities that no "infidel" may visit.

A tenuous Moslem claim. It's on the basis of this religious tradition that the Moslems designated the entire Jewish Temple Mount to be their holy site. The Israeli Government, in its constant spirit of accommodation to Moslem sensibilities, has largely acceded to this tradition and has put the area in and around the two mosques entirely under Moslem control. But how would Christians feel if, instead of from the Temple Mount, Moslem tradition had Mohammed ascend from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and if the Moslem Arabs were to claim that site as their property? The Christian world, often ready to consent to Moslem claims against Jews and Israelis, would be greatly astonished and would certainly resist such claim. But Moslem Arab assertiveness doesn't end there. On the tenuous claim to the Temple Mount, they have construed a claim to the entire city of Jerusalem (or at the very least to its eastern part), which they have declared to be their "third holiest city". And it would be an insult to all Moslems and all Arabs to leave the city in the hands of the "infidel Jews".

Jerusalem: never an Arab capital. But the city of Jerusalem—in contrast to Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus—has never played any major role in the political and religious lives of the Moslem Arabs. It was never a political center, never a national or even a provincial or sub-provincial capital of any country since biblical times. It was the site of one Moslem holy place, but otherwise a backwater to the Arabs. The passion for Jerusalem was not discovered by the Moslem Arabs until most recent history.

Jews are not the usurpers in Jerusalem. They have been living there since the Biblical era and have been the majority population since the 19th century. Jews have holy sites in most cities of the world. But do they claim sovereignty over those cities because of it? Of course not! It would be preposterous. And the Moslem Arab claim to Jerusalem, based on the mosques on the Temple Mount, is just as untenable. Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital.

FLAME

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try to an obscure male escort in su
and tie, granted him a kiss, closed th
door, locked it, put her pocketbook o
the dresser, opened a closet, took off he
coat, put the coat on a hanger, an
proceeded, rather primly, to undres
A few catcalls and whistles rang ou
but soon the crew fell silent, as
stunned. Not for any wanton display
of sexuality—on the contrary, she w
almost ideally proper. No captain wou
find any dust in her room. The who
purpose of her performance, it seeme
was to document the thrill of knowin
herself to be perfectly neat while b
lieving herself to be safely alone. Th
camera, aroused by the sight of h
naked arms and thighs, began a slo
zoom, as if wanting to smell her. U
perturbed, she took off her brassier
pulled off her stockings, stepped out
her underpants, folding each garme
and putting it where it belonged. Th
she slipped into a flowered nightgow
pulled back the blanket, lay down, c
ered herself, switched off her bedsi
lamp, and, still visible to the came
emitted a soundless, smiling sigh, a
fell asleep. Another succession of nu
bers, and another woman took off
clothes, this time in a bathing hut
the beach. She, too, was neat. She p
on an old-fashioned bathing su
cupped her breasts in her hands to i
prove the fit, and scampered out fo
swim. The most elaborate and my
fying performance was the third a
last one. It began with a woman tak
a shower with her hair gathered up
a plastic cap. She soaped herself wi
great thoroughness and no evid
pleasure. Then she toweled herself
went into her bedroom, took off
plastic cap, and, still naked, brush
her blonde hair in front of a mir
made the bed (which showed off
behind to advantage), got dressed,
on lipstick, strapped a pocketbook
her arm, and left, no doubt on her w
to work as a secretary.

The next morning, we docke
Adelaide. Some artist or prank
had painted an enormous white q
tion mark on the mountain t
loomed over the shabby little por
was so large that there probably wa
a house in the town that didn't h
a view of some part of it from at l
one of its windows. How dubious co
a man feel in a place that conduc

, business under such a stem' I al
ost looked forward to getting tired
e. But fate intervened in the per-
of the radio officer's wife. She
aded with the captain on my be-
f, and he relented. She repeated
me, word for word, what she had
to him, wringing her hands, all but
eeling before him, in her heavy
nch accent: "*Pleez* don't geev'eem
week' He eez a *boy* steel' What a *steel*
z meuzer *say*!"

Slowly we worked our way through
ne ten or twelve Australian har-
rs and slowly wended our way back.
ie sailors spent all their free time
th the sluttish whores who waited
us in the pubs. I wasn't interested.
ree weeks earlier, in Panama, in
first effort to forget Sylvia, I had
efly lain on a filthy cot with a young
l whose breasts reminded me of
shed fruit. I felt only pity for her,
d the wish to know that she was
ved by some boy or young man, not
e. Then, instead of leaving her or
se taking her as befitted our con-
act—a dollar slipped into her moth-
s palm outside the hot clapboard
om where we lay under a tin roof—
kissed her, and in that kiss showed
r the passion that I felt for Sylvia
d no one else, and realized only
en, by the startled hurt in her eyes,
hat a violation that was. I didn't
nt to repeat that scene or vary it in
y way. In Sydney, I stayed away from
e brothels whose praises I had been
earing ever since we left New York,
d went to the history museum in-
ead. But then a devouring sexual
unger took possession of me. At the
ste restante in Brisbane, I had found
tters from my mother, my brother,
me friends—none from Sylvia. I
dn't written her, either. Her silence
as crushing nonetheless. I had to for-
t her. Discard her, annul her. Dispel
er memory with every thrust into
hatever soft willing body would of-
r itself, the more faceless and name-
less the better. Oh, I could
hardly wait!

But the whores of Brisbane were
onuments of unpleasure. Each one
ad a porch for a pedestal. There, if
ey were not occupied, they sat in
ie white-hard glare of a naked bulb,
aring, exhausted and brutal, through

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a square window, showing us what we [illegible] lips, nipples, [illegible] cunt like a vertical sneer between fat, blue-veined thighs. Eight men stood in a queue in front of a shack with a curtain drawn over the window, shifting from foot to foot. My crewmates joined the queue. This was the only bitch worth fucking here, they said. They knew her, Marjorie was her name. The man at the front of the line kicked the door several times and threatened to break the teeth, whether of Marjorie or of a client who was taking his time with her I couldn't tell, but presently Marjorie threw open the door, a tall blonde woman in a blue bathrobe, and started haranguing "the whole lookin' lot" of us in a voice and with words that shriveled every remnant of desire I had left in me.

My abstinence—then and at future ports—earned me a reputation as an odd, possibly queer bird. My cabinmate was an effeminate homosexual boy from a neighborhood in Brooklyn called Bay Ridge ("Gay Ridge," he called it) who had moved in with me because he could no longer abide the manners of his alcoholic bunk neighbor. We liked each other. This gave rise to rumors about us. And I had other unmanly foibles. I didn't drink like an able-bodied seaman, just a couple of slugs from a bottle now and then, never to the point of stupor. In an argument over a gambling debt, I had absorbed an insult a normal sailor would have answered with blows. Out at sea, on the way to Jamaica, I could be seen on deck in my leisure hours reading a fat book and growing a beard.

But I knew how to compensate. I had an ability that has always been prized by men at sea: I could tell stories. I told war stories and ghost stories, I retold novels by Jack London and episodes from Prescott's *The Conquest of Mexico*. William Beebe's deep-sea [illegible] were especially popular. These sessions usually took place on deck, at night, with the kitchen staff and a couple of seamen, or, if the weather was bad, with a larger crowd in the crew's messroom, over beer and crackers.

One night the cook asked me in an "out with it" sort of tone whether I really did have a woman waiting for me in New York, as I had claimed. I produced Sylvia's picture for proof, and added a fictitious story about how I had seduced her (it was the other way around), and a true one about a manual for hypnotists that had proved marvelously effective in heightening Sylvia's already more than adequate sexual response. Of this ability my audience demanded an immediate demonstration: Could I hypnotize the cook? He was the biggest man on board. I could not refuse this challenge without irreversible loss of face. After about forty minutes I had the cook, all three hundred pounds of him, balancing on one foot and then on the other, and swinging his arms, convinced he was skating on a lake in Uppsala. I gave him the posthypnotic command that he serve me a glass of the captain's wine—which he did, after a bewildered descent to the storage room. That won me the day and regained me my crewmates' acceptance. There was only one thing I wanted more: oblivion in sex or love, an end to the memory of Sylvia, which, far from fading, had rooted itself in the center of my chest as a dull, churning ache.

The whores of Kingston were many in number, and many were pretty, and some even seemed to enjoy their profession. Was this a foretaste of hell? The more tempting a smile or glance or touch, the more savory the sight of a pair of long legs or the swell of a nipple hardening between my fingers, the more sharply Sylvia rose up in revolt against any substitution. I knew what would happen if I went to bed with any of these women: nothing at all, and the crew would hear of it. O thirst of Tantalus! I drank enough rum to drown a whale, but Sylvia, Sylvia just danced in that sea like a buoy, with me clinging to her. What was wrong with me? Was I impotent? How could I murder her in my heart? I walked. I must have walked for miles, turning corners at random, getting lost, coming back to familiar places again, the pain in my chest so deep and wide there were moments when it made me gasp.

The next morning, a crew of dockworkers came aboard. The chief steward told me I could feed them leftovers. One glance at the faces crowding the open pantry window and I could see wh[at] These men were hungry. They pointe[d] at their mouths and held up metal an[d] clay bowls. One of them handed me [a] tin can. I hesitated. The food was to[o] good to be turned into slop. "Put it i[n] mahn, put it in," he said. He insisted [on] give him a little of everything: mea[t] vegetables, eggs, bread, butter, potatoe[s] cheese, sausage, gravy, and milk, up [to] the top. The men had their own spoon[s] When my supplies ran out, the crew['s] messboy gave from his.

After washing the dishes, I went [to] my cabin and found an old man [in] rags—old by the standards of a twe[n]ty-one-year-old: he was probably [in] his fifties—standing next to my c[ot] with a bundle of outdated magazin[es] he wanted to sell me. I cast a glan[ce] around to see if he had stolen an[y]thing. He read my suspicion. From [a] blue zippered pocket sewn onto h[is] dirty white shirt, he drew a plast[ic] folder containing a stained piece [of] paper bearing the stamp of a Kingsto[n] police precinct, a typewritten atte[s]tation of his moral probity, a sign[a]ture, and his photograph affixed wi[th] two staples. To get rid of him, I o[f]fered to buy his magazines.

"How much?"

"Notting."

"You're not selling them?"

"No, mahn, you can tekkem."

He was hurt. What could I do [but] thanked him for the gift and held op[en] the door for him. But he didn't leav[e]. He asked me if I had any currency [I] needed to change, he would like [to] take it to the bank for me. Looking i[n] to his eyes, I believed him. In view [of] his rags, the hungry men I had fe[d] the crew's messboy's warnings abo[ut] thieves in Jamaica, I didn't trust h[im] one bit. But I was already taking c[are] my wallet, what did it matter, a[nd] made a perfunctory count of the bi[lls] and handed them to him. Better [to] lose my money than insult him.

"Can you change these into d[o]lars?" I asked.

"Yes, sir, tank you, sir," he said, a l[i]tle hastily, and left, taking the mag[a]zines with him. Ten minutes later [he] knocked on my door.

"Please, sir, if I can leave de mag[a]zine? It's raining, I doan wan dem [to] get wet-up."

Later I learned that the old m[an]



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had gone from cabin to cabin offerin his banking service and using my tru as a reference, telling everyone I ha given him forty dollars' worth Swedish, Australian, and Panaman an bills. No one thought highly of th transaction. Down the drain went m slim account in that precious curren cy, respect. I was the joke of the shi

That evening I made the rounds the harbor again, with my coll turned up against a steady drizzl Then the sky turned an eerie dark o ange shading into purple, a wind star ed sweeping boxes and baskets abou the clouds cracked open, and the ci stood plunged in a thunderous lashin downpour. I hunched my shoulde and tried to skip out of the way of a ankle-deep river of garbage comin my way, and stopped at the sight of skinny old woman who stood laughin out loud at the sight of me.

"What's so funny."

"White mahn afraid of de rain!"

And off she went again, howlin with laughter and clapping her lon hands together. Strangely, it wasn unpleasant, maybe because there w no malice in it. She just found m very, very funny.

I invited her to come drinking wi me. She was from Haiti, she said. could hear it in her accent, but th melody of her speech was Jamaica She told me the stories of the ha bor—the police raids, the murde "Lahst week one Feeneesh mahn ke Jamaica girl!" I can still see the coc stooping to look down at us on his w upstairs with one girl straddling hi piggyback and another one pushin his enormous rump as if rolling a ro up a hill. He shakes his head in dism

The old woman was teaching m how to drum with my hands on th table, or, rather, trying to prove th white men have no rhythm.

Da-doom-da, da-doom.

I repeated it.

"No, no. Not like dis. Like dis!"

"Kalle, Kalle," the cook said, an moved on with his girls. The boy fro Bay Ridge was asleep on my left, h arms folded into a pillow on th counter. Other men, other girls d scended the steps. Smiles of satie gestures of amorous languor.

Da-doom-da, da-doom.

This was getting tedious. I rose

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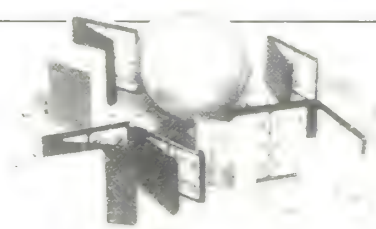
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my feet and offered her a dollar. S
didn't take it.

"Don't go by self," she said. "Ma
mahn fight you, cut you, steal yo
Come, sit down, I teach you."

And she repeated her beat, whi
was so simple any child could perfo
it. Was she taking me for a fool? I s
down and looked into her eyes.

"Do it," she said.

I just kept looking into her ey
She stared back. Her look was ha
at first, then it softened. Her iris
were the color of pooled oil, very de
of gold. It is an adventure to sit silen
ly face to face with a stranger, and o
of the most direct ways I know to p
there is no such thing as an individ
al, that each of us is a multitude.
drinking companion's skin, for exa
ple, was very dark, but there wa
moment when I saw peering throu
her the features of a ruddy-cheek
white man with twinkling blue ey
Was this illusion or vision? She, t
seemed startled at moments by wh
she saw. A couple of times she laugh
After a while, a tear rolled down
of her cheeks. I reached out to dry
face with my hand. She tilted
head, cradling her cheek in my pa
and closed her eyes. We sat like t
until my arm got tired. Then I held
hand for a while. She was fall
asleep. Several members of the Se
Seas crew sat staring at us in compl
disbelief. I woke up my cabinma
said good night to my friend, and l

The next morning, I saw an a
lescent boy in tight shorts leave
chief steward's cabin and walk de
Not only I saw him, half the crew
To this day I don't understand
the chief steward was allowed to
remarks, and it was forgotten—wh
I had to endure repeated recital
what had been perceived as my
mance with a hag.

After lunch, the old man's face
peared in the pantry window. He
come back to report to me about
money. The banks did not trust h
guards wouldn't even let him near
counter. Would I please write a n
saying that he was my messenger

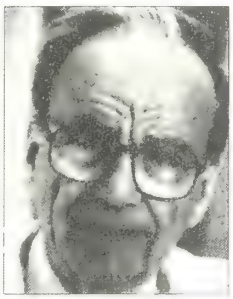
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Tobacco advertising is banned on TV, so tobacco companies go after kids in Murdoch's *TV Guide*. He could say no. He's worth $3 billion.



Larry Tisch

As the man who controls Lorillard Tobacco, he could ask Congress to halt all tobacco advertising and promotion. The tobacco companies would save $4 billion a year. That's $4 billion more annual profit for their shareholders — in the short run. In the long run, fewer kids would be enticed to replace smokers who die or quit. But is that bad? *Fortune* says Tisch is a billionaire.



Henry Kravis

Since his company, RJR, began using a cartoon character to push Camels, Camel's share of the teen and pre-teen market has jumped from 1% to 32%. He could become a health hero by joining with Tisch in asking Congress to ban all tobacco promotion — and boost the industry bottom line by $4 billion. Judging from the *Forbes* 400 list, he can afford this risk. He's worth half a billion



Michael Miles

Miles runs Philip Morris. Who'd have more reason to want a total ad ban than the shareholders of Philip Morris? Marlboro smokers wouldn't quit buying Marlboros just because the advertising stopped, yet Philip Morris could quit spending all those billions trying to defend its market share. Miles — who himself quit smoking long ago — made $5 million last year

What do all five of these men have in common?
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that I needed his services? I was touched and repentant to have ever doubted him. I wrote the note and felt vindicated before the crew. I would show them my dollars when he came back. And tonight I would follow the cook's example. No more upright white man! So many women! So many styles of allure! I thought of one girl in particular who had hitched up her dress with an innocent lewdness that made my heart skip. Why didn't I go for her?

I actually met her again in the evening. She rubbed up against me: "Mek love to Jamaica girl?" But when I looked into her eyes, I saw only exhaustion and want. Pity is not an aphrodisiac, and neither is charity. I drank more liquor than I could hold that night. Some large men threw me out of their bar for vomiting on the jukebox. The next thing I remember is finding myself in a fight with a stocky blond man while my cabinmate screams for help. The man curses me in a language I don't understand. He punches me in the chest. I punch the air and fall backward into a puddle, life is a dream, I am on my feet again, his blows are connecting better than mine, a swarm of screaming girls surrounds us, they are pulling at him, "Stop! Stop!," he is flashing a knife—is this possible? is this me?—I am elated, I am amazed, again I fall, something tells me to accept defeat, I am laughing, I love the world.

I have no memory of how I got home, but my cabinmate told me what happened. I must have passed out in the ditch. My enemy walked away with his wrath appeased. Five girls escorted us back to the ship. I told one of them that I could imagine falling in love with her. She took down my address.

I overslept the next morning. The chief steward was furious because, not for the first time, he had to do part of my job. He needle[d] me about my [illegible] and the service. "And where is the man with your money, Kalle? Are you still hoping?" I was. We were scheduled to cast off at three-thirty.

At twelve-thirty [illegible] came to tell me the banks had refused to deal with [illegible] after [illegible] brought them my letter. He handed me my money in a plastic envelope.

"I'm sorry, captain," he said. "Please to tek my apology."

"I'm sorry," I said. "You went to much trouble. Let me pay you f that."

"No, no!" He held up his hands

"Please," I said, "you'll make t feel bad."

"I never do notting fe you, so I ca nt tek ye money."

"At least let me pay you for yo magazines."

"No no, sir. Are fe you, magazine give dem to you." So he hadn't fo gotten that.

"But you need the money."

He smiled. "Maybe I do someth fe you den. I will buy you a good-go souvenir."

"Like what?"

"You will see. A beauty-full thi Fe to remember Jamaica."

"How much does it cost?"

He rolled his eyes, calculati "Twenty dollar?" All my suspici came back.

"You don't mean to say, sir, you s doan trust me?"

"Oh yes, yes, I do. But twenty d lars is a lot of money."

"It could be less. I doan rememb

"But there's no time. We're le ing very soon."

"Don't worry, sir. I come back. trust me now. What I will bring fe is a beauty-full thing. Fe to give you' modder, you' sweetheart."

I gave him a twenty-dollar bill.

The worst part of this interact was that it took place in front of chief steward, who would not fai pass it on to the kitchen staff. I g myself the philosophical consolat that if this was a scam, it was aln a work of art and deserved a rewa

After lunch, I fed the dockwo ers, as usual, through the portho window, and went on with my cle ing. The cook and the crew's m boy stuck in their heads: "Did y man come yet?" Grin, grin.

"He'll be back," I said, with feig confidence.

"Kalle, Kalle."

At two-thirty, the chief steward l me to move several hundred pound onions from one storage room to n other. It was not my job and this my lunch hour, but I was in no p tion to object. When I came back p tired and sweaty, I found my ca mate reading on his bunk.

'Have you seen him?"
ie sh k his head. I had the im
ssion that he pitied me.
No one's betting on this one," he
l.
lay down on my cot. I was ex-
isted, but I kept myself awake read-
the old man's magazines until
ee-thirty. Then I fell asleep. A
ck on the door woke me up.
Come in."
t was my man, out of breath, hold-
in his hand a mumy-colored glis-
ing object.
'Please, sir, I'm sorry I'm late. But
e is de souvenir."
'It's beautiful," I said.
t was perfectly hideous, a pink
celain conch shell drooling what
ked like porcelain water and dou-
ng as a paradise island covered with
celain fern and porcelain palms, a
en porcelain dinosaur, and a minia-
e pink naked porcelain couple. But
as happy, very happy, that he had
ne back. Just in time, too. I could
ar the clangor of steel plates dropped
o place as the hold was being closed
the main deck.
'It was only eleven dollar," he said,
nding me the change, "on account
I bargain de mahn down."
'Thank you," I said, "thank you
y much. And now let me pay you
all your efforts."
"No, please, I doan want no mon-
" he said, "but if you have a shirt or
rousers that maybe you doan want,
ill take dat."
I gave him most of my clothes—
nts, shirts, underwear, socks, a wind-
eaker, a pair of sneakers, a pair of
oes, a couple of sweaters. My cab-
mate added two T-shirts. We
apped all these things into a sheet.
ould pay for it if the chief steward
jected. Let him see it. Let the crew
it. The old man wished me a hap-
homecoming and left with the bun-
slung over his shoulder. I took a
wer, changed, and went outside to
tch the harbor receding as the ship
nt out to sea. It would be a while
. The dockworkers were still on
ard, waiting for the third mate to ap-
ve some papers their foreman had
nded him. Some of the men I had
earlier smiled at me. One of them
s wearing my City College T-shirt.
nother one had on my paint-spat-



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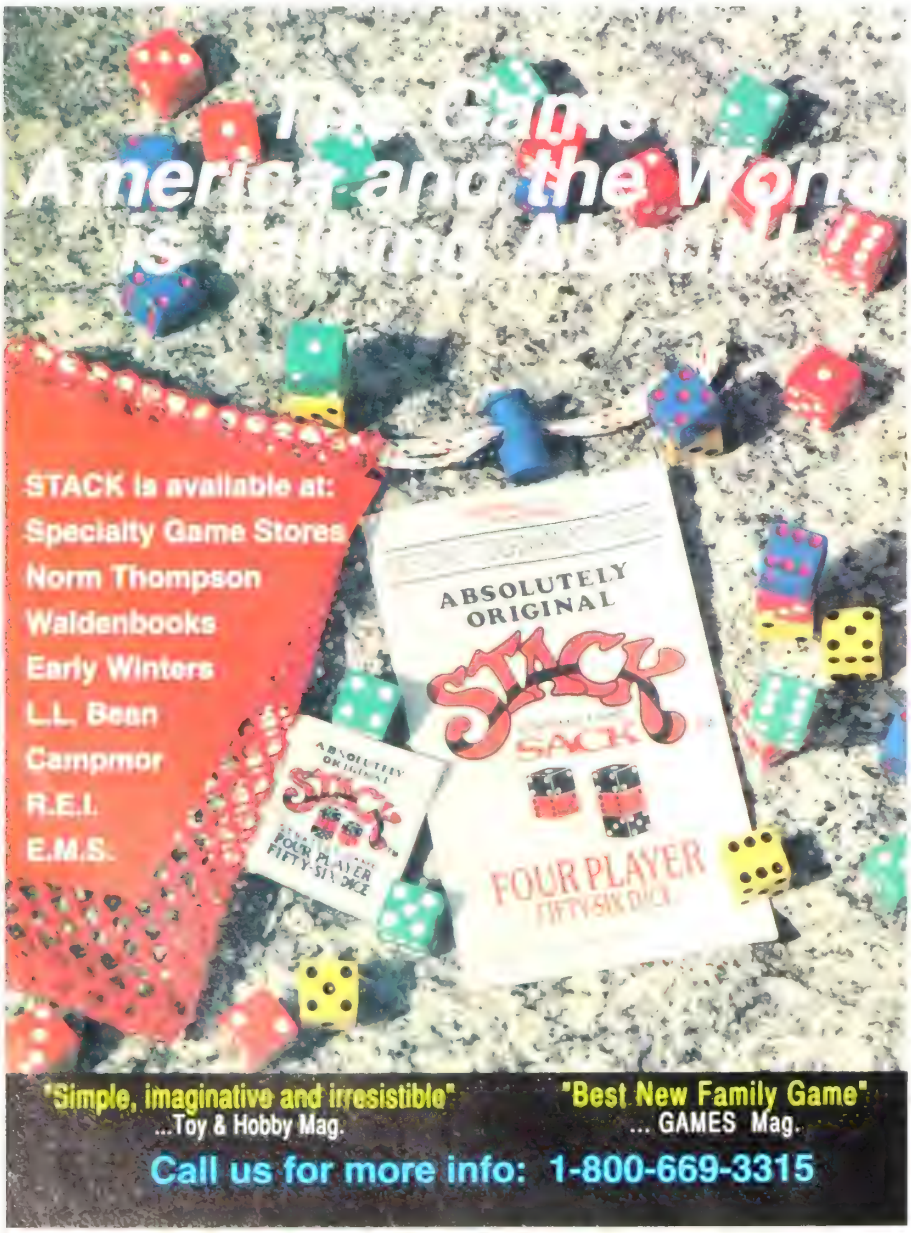
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tered jeans. A round neck sweater, my sneakers. Another one of my shirts. My red socks. My blue sweater. My windbreaker. He had never seen all my clothes.

The next day, during the afternoon break, I was leaning on the railing by the bow with the wind in my ears, watching a school of dolphins tumbling alongside the ship, when an impulse came to me, a whim really, but with the weight of a decision confirmed and long past any doubting. I took my wallet from my back pocket and pulled the picture of Sylvia out of its plastic sheath and put the wallet back in my pocket and looked at her for a while. I tried to send her my love. This good resolve met with resistance. I wished her one moment of horrible remorse on my account and a reasonably happy life thereafter. That was more like it. Then I opened my fingers and watched the picture flutter away and spiral down into the sea. ■

January Index Sources

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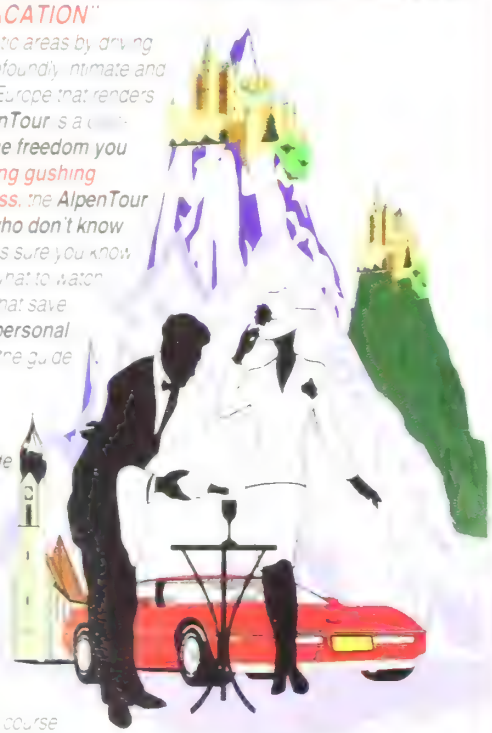
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to race), it is hard to do.

May I also remind *Harper's* readers that the Forum involved live human beings responding to one another; it was not a compilation of prepared set speeches. I have no doubt that Professor William Kerrigan's now infamous "virginity" musings would never have occurred if the atmosphere had been more of a goodwilled, respectful exchange of ideas instead of a competition for verbal space. Therefore, I find it sadly ironic that Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College, has achieved moral greatness as a result of this discussion. "Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous," Leon, "there shall be no more cake and ale?"

This quote from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* brings me to my last point. Shakespeare, perhaps best of all, shows that the difference between the tragic and the comic in human sexuality always depends on whether individuals act responsibly with a concern for others in their community. Cheering audiences across the country have been seeing this in Kenneth Branagh's film version of *Much Ado About Nothing*. The film opens with the line "Men were deceivers ever," but the repetition of that worldly wisdom does not prevent the picnicking women from reacting exuberantly when *men* arrive on the scene. Then comes a carousal of joyful matchmaking.

Meanwhile, there are some forces at work who hate laughter and happiness. They can only destroy, not create. Like Milton's Satan, Iago in *Othello*, and too many in our society today, Don John in *Much Ado* reduces all human love, hope, and joy to vulgar, death-dealing lust.

Like Thayo at the end of Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony*, we must not let the "witching" of hatred end our story. We must still seek out the positive aspects of centuries of life-giving learning that have come down to us. Like Willa Cather's Bishop, let us uncynically still believe that "great love" is the means whereby "our perceptions are made true," and through which miracles can still happen. Let us, like Shakespeare's joyful communities at the end of [illegible] *Much Ado About Nothing*, unleash [illegible] the dance of life. Let us in so doing not [illegible] our feet [illegible] in the earth. But like the Pueblo Indians, let us lift our feet *up* in the dance so we leave inspired, enlivened, and not tired.

The Literary Life

For some reason, one that resides within a fantasy I have of actually being a writer, I thought it might be nice to let *Harper's Index* know I am doing. You see, I like to play a game called "Literary Life." It's a lot like "Dungeons and Dragons." In "Literary Life" a man reads the *New York Times Book Review*, begins to discourse with the critics in his own private way, goes to the bookstore and looks through the books the critics praise, and then goes home, pretending the literary commentary is addressed to him. In this way, a peon like me can actually get the vicarious experience of being "literary," and though this is fun sometimes, the game has to end, and I usually end up disappointed.

For example, I read the review in the October 13 *New York Times Book Review* by Jonathan Raban [who wrote "The Next Last Frontier," August], praising *Travels With Lizbeth*, a book by a hobo, Lars Eisner [who wrote "My Daily Dives in the Dumpster," December 1991]. Considering that a genius was discovered in a Dumpster, I decided to play my own little literary Dumpster game. As Lewis Lapham perhaps remembers, when a story I'd written (regarding the travails of being a sincere poet in Dallas) was rejected by *Harper's* under the old saw that it was too long (this before *Harper's* began running its very long Folio sections in order to display works of "great" literary talent), well, when it was rejected, I burned all my writings in a Dumpster out back. Drunk as hell (I was still "sincere" at the time), I watched the flames devour over twenty years' worth of work, billowing like a cry of grief into the night sky.

Of course, I was unaware that it is [illegible] to burn rubbish in the Dumpster, so when the police arrived after a dutiful call from the woman upstairs, I was dragged to the slammer, where I sat shivering for three days, talking to

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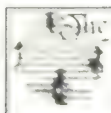
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by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 87.



WORDS

A. Type of criticism

B. Renowned geyser (2 wds.)

Emollient

D. Adorn, embellish

E. Roate that may lawfully be used (3 wds.)

F. "Laugh to scorn/ ... of man" (2 wds., *Macbeth*)

G. Swell, nifty, peachy (hyph.)

H. Dolt, lummox

I. Complex, involved

J. Irish revolutionary group founded in New York in 1858

K. Game once known as "splintstrike"

L. "The sweet" of Shakespeare's "sweets to the sweet"

M. Dopes, nitwits, dummies

N. Unsubstantial; vague

O. Expediting, pressing

P. Determine ...

Q. Sorcerer, ... of fitting

R. Th... (2 wds.)

S. Wo...

T. Minute insect, ...

U. Fleeced, stung, ...

V. ... cedure

W. ...

X. Indian people of ...

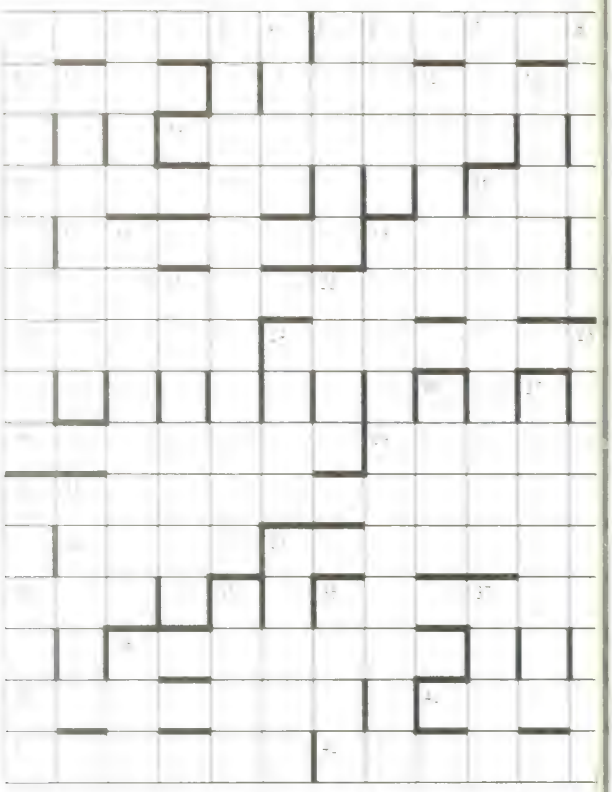
Y. Alienation

Z. ... after "The")

Z1. Bizarre, mat... 92 192 130 170 183 207 84

PUZZLE

By the Book



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Last summer the only full menu restaurant in Cherokee, Oklahoma closed its doors. So the town's rural electric co-op went right to work, helped raise $25,000 from local investors and got a new restaurant into business. It employs 13 and is already exceeding profit projections. Small potatoes? Not for folks in Cherokee. Farther north, there's Soyland Power Co-op in downstate Illinois. Here the co-op helped a family-owned popcorn warehouse expand its operations. But that warehouse is just one of the many businesses to benefit from co-op initiatives that stimulate the local economy. For example, $320,000 in Soyland community development loans have helped 24 businesses generate $5 million in economic growth, which isn't peanuts. Keeping local businesses in business, and helping others get started—it's no small part of the big job America's rural electric co-ops are doing in Oklahoma, Illinois, and all across the country.



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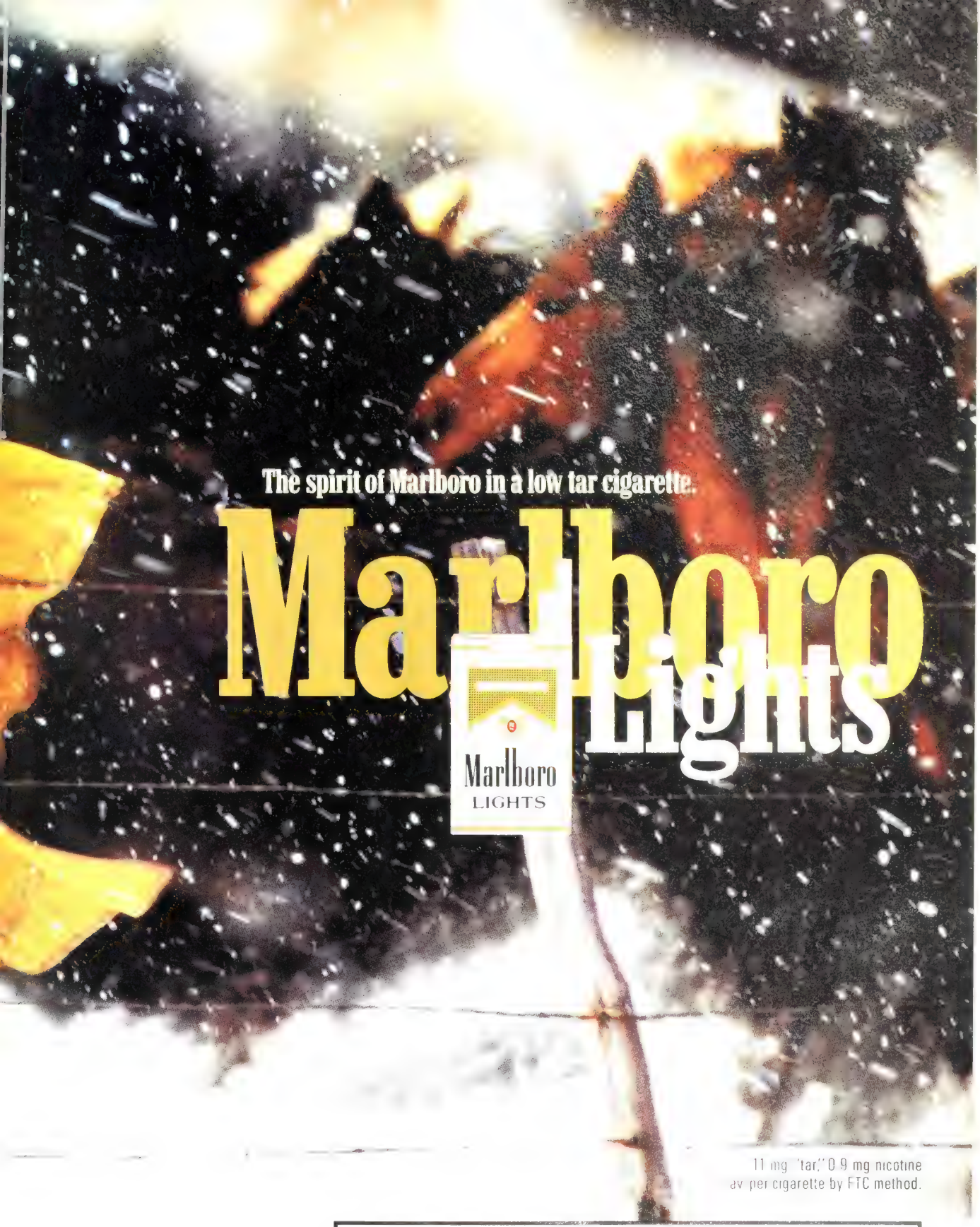
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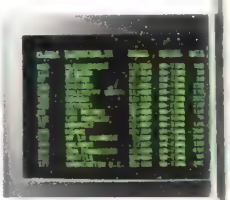
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LETTERS

Do Americans Really Care About Education?

As a university professor I enjoyed Benjamin Barber's astute assessment of why Americans blather on about the importance of education ["America Skips School," November 1993] without doing anything to reform it. As a historian, however, I am skeptical that more democracy is the answer. In actuality, democracy is part of the problem.

Most of the glowing virtues that Barber ascribes to democracy—such as critical thought and deliberation, civic responsibility, and an educated citizenry—actually are derived from republican and enlightenment ideals. Nineteenth-century American democracy exalted values that undermined rather than reinforced these political principles. In addition to majority rule, democracy—as Alexis de Tocqueville recognized—relied upon the authority of public opinion, which was not based on truth per se, but which emerged from popular consensus and custom, two powerful forces that stood in opposition to deliberation and toleration.

The other feature of democracy and republicanism that Barber ignores is their tendency to exclude certain groups from participation, a practice often defended as a matter of political expediency. For republicans, this meant excluding people without property—slaves, women, servants, or anyone without sufficient land and wealth—who were viewed as dependent classes; for antebellum democrats, this meant excluding people without the right of "self-ownership"—slaves, women, free blacks, paupers, and a large portion of foreign-born and working-class men and women who politicians viewed as outside the domain of liberty. For many Americans in the 1990s, it means poor, urban black youths. Democracy, in fact, is the source of many of the problems that Barber identifies as barriers to improving our educational system; a lasting solution will require dramatic reinvention of democracy rather than revival of some mythical version of it.

Nancy Isenberg
Cedar Falls, Iowa

Of course Americans are not serious about improving our public schools. The value this country places on education continues to diminish. One obvious reason is demographics. The percentage of voters with school-age children is at an all-time low. Those factors that make one more likely to vote (e.g., being white, professional, upper-income, and older) inversely correlate with those statistical characteristics associated with people with young children. This fact, coupled with the current lack of a feeling of community in our society, means that the majority of voting Americans have no direct interest in spending tax dollars on education.

The problems in our schools reflect

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[illegible] economy in decline and a society in a period of transformation. With the decline in real wealth, education has by necessity [illegible] agricultural. Right now, Americans are more concerned with preserving their short-term gains than with contributing to the long-term [illegible] public domain. Any real improvement of the educational system in this country will have to wait for better economic times and the development of a viable social contract. As a country, we must find within ourselves the generosity of spirit not to turn away from our neighbor's children.

[illegible] *Hutton*
St. Louis

Public education will not improve, according to Benjamin Barber, until teachers' salaries are raised to "levels that would attract the best young professionals in our society." This is a laudable, oft-proposed, but presently impractical idea. It is not that the money could not be found if we were, as he notes, serious about children. Money, in fact, is moot. Bright young people already want to be public-school teachers even at the scandalously inequitable salaries that announce our lack of seriousness about education. The real problem is that the best young professionals have historically been the last people the typical administrator *wants* in the public schools. Anecdotes abound that reveal that given a choice between a bright young person and a mediocre graduate of a local teachers' college, the person doing the hiring will regularly and instinctively decide against the bright young person. (In Fairfax County, Virginia, a candidate who had failed the National Teachers' Examination was chosen to teach fifth grade over a candidate who scored in the 95th percentile. In Brooklyn a summa cum laude graduate of Stanford in economics was not hired to teach junior-high math because her transcript was deficient in the requisite math courses. Impressive job applicants have been told that they "can't communicate with children" because of the selective [illegible] they attended.) In public education academic excellence is suspect.

Thousands of liberal-arts graduates apply for teaching positions every year, and it is wrongheaded to assume a priori that they can't cope as well as anyone can with the challenges of the typical classroom, including miscarriages and fights, and hungry, homeless, psychically scarred, dangerous, frightened, or unhoping kids.

There are many reasons for the deeply ingrained prejudice in the schools against people whose bachelor degrees are not in education. Until this discrimination is recognized and rooted out, bright would-be teachers can knock on school doors until the cows come home but will not be admitted.

Name Withheld
Alexandria, Va.

The myth that public-school teachers are vastly underpaid was laid to rest years ago. Their salaries are now comparable with those of college faculty at state and land-grant institutions! For example, in 1992–1993, average salaries throughout the United States in the physical sciences for three professorial levels were $38,332, $44,512, and $65,538. For public-school teachers in Kennett Consolidated School District, Chester County, Pennsylvania, the average base salary was $45,740. For 1993–1994, continuing teachers received increases averaging 10 percent, and one third now receive base salaries of $60,800 to $69,300. And the KCSD is not the highest-paid district in Chester County or Pennsylvania.

My point is that salaries of teachers and professors may be considered low by comparison with certain professions. But it is incorrect to conclude that they are underpaid, if one takes into account the much smaller number of hours involved each year (typically 180 days or 1,300 hours versus 2,080 hours for a full twelve months). At the same time, these teachers are provided with lifetime guarantees of employment because of tenure, generous fringe benefits and fully salaried sabbatical leaves every seven years.

Second, Barber omitted one of the principal culprits responsible for the steady decline of public-school performance—the National Educatio[illegible] Association, and its affiliated state a[illegible] local organizations: the most powerf[illegible] labor union in the country. Childre[illegible] in K–12 are held hostage to their co[illegible] tract negotiations, especially in Penn[illegible] sylvania, where teachers can strik[illegible] without losing any wages. The com[illegible] munity (in its taxes) and students (i[illegible] their education) suffer from a refusal [illegible] the NEA to recognize any form of me[illegible] it pay in contract negotiations. Thu[illegible] the *best* and the *worst* teachers receiv[illegible] identical salaries and increases. Ther[illegible] is no performance-based compensa[illegible] tion or merit pay. In addition to turn[illegible] ing off TV sets, eliminating the strik[illegible] and tenure as weapons of the NEA[illegible] would do much to help solve the cur[illegible] rent school problems.

Norman F. Ness
Landenberg, Pa.

So passionate are Benjamin Barber[illegible] preachments about democracy tha[illegible] this scarce flower of human histor[illegible] has become for him the sole rationale[illegible] for education. That, at least, is an ad[illegible] vance over the oft-stated dual purpos[illegible] of American education: to get a job[illegible] and to become a democratic citizen[illegible] He wisely rejects the first but puts a ro[illegible] mantic notion in its place: "learning t[illegible] be free." But just as feminists who claim[illegible] that men are intrinsically insensitive[illegible] must explain the music, art, and poetry[illegible] produced by men over the centuries, so[illegible] a theory of human education based on[illegible] the idea of democracy must explain[illegible] how so much education and civiliza[illegible] tion has taken place over the centuries[illegible] in the absence of democracy. Comenius, an early proponent of a liberal[illegible] and universal education, did not live[illegible] in what we would recognize as a[illegible] democracy.

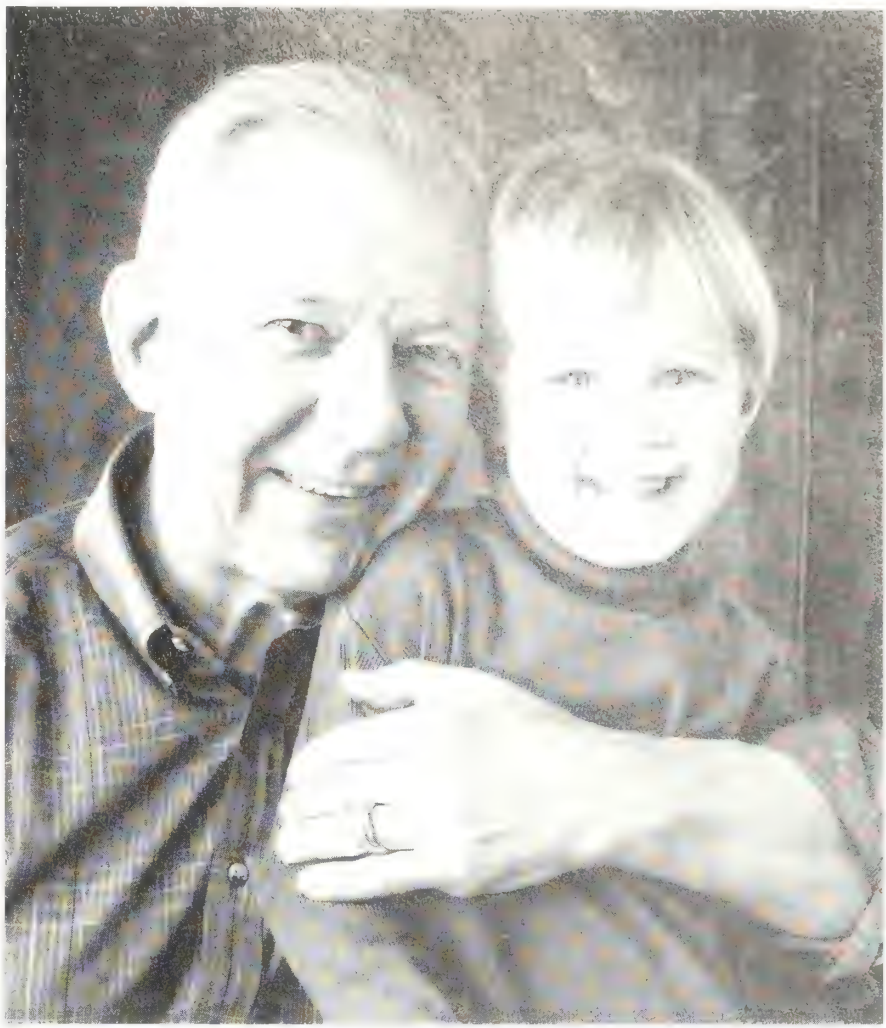
The primary rationale of education is to pass on the experience of the tribe. The more liberal the education, the more inclusive and universal the definition of the tribe, until all of human experience is garnered and passed on. This process can and does take place under a wide range of political regimes from democracy to totalitarianism. What Professor Barber waxes passionate about is an American conceit, or the result of what other peoples see as American cultural myopia.

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However, it is important to know the following: PROSCAR doesn't work for everyone. Even though your prostate may shrink, you may not see an improvement in urinary flow or symptoms. And you may need to take PROSCAR for 6 months or more to see whether it helps you.

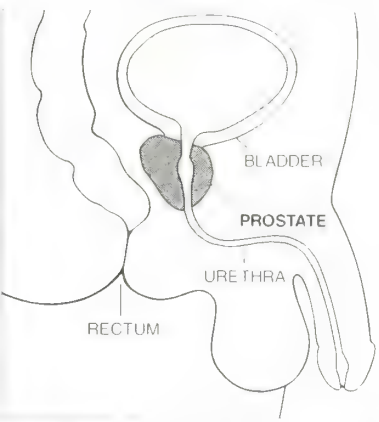


How PROSCAR can shrink an enlarged prostate.

As a man ages, a key hormone can help cause the prostate to grow. PROSCAR actually blocks the production of this hormone, so it helps shrink the prostate to a smaller size in many men. As a result, some men treated with PROSCAR experience an increased urinary flow and an improvement in urinary symptoms.

Why you should see your doctor soon.

Your doctor has several options for the treatment of symptomatic BPH: watchful waiting (monitoring the condition with regular checkups), medication, or surgery. It's important to see your doctor because the problem doesn't usually get better by itself. In many cases, the prostate continues to enlarge and the symptoms may get worse. So if your urinary symptoms are bothering you, have your family doctor or a urologist assess your condition and ask if PROSCAR is an appropriate treatment for you.



The prostate surrounds part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it can squeeze the urethra and cause urinary problems.

It is also important to have regular checkups. *While benign prostate enlargement is not cancer and does not lead to cancer, the two conditions can exist at the same time.*

Remember, only a doctor can evaluate your symptoms and their possible causes. So if your urinary symptoms are bothering you, don't wait any longer. You may find that your enlarged prostate can be made into a smaller problem.

For more information about prostate enlargement and PROSCAR, call 1-800-635-4452 today.

TABLETS
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Please see patient information on the following page

[illegible] 761 USA 93

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR® (Prahs-car)
Generic name: finasteride (fin-AS-tur-eyed)

PROSCAR is for the treatment of symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia and for use by men only.

Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR if you have a medical condition called benign prostatic hyperplasia or BPH. This occurs [illegible]

Please read this information, as well as the [illegible] medication, before you start taking PROSCAR. Also, [illegible] time you renew your prescription, in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROSCAR when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is BPH?

BPH is an enlargement of the prostate gland. After age 50, most men develop enlarged prostates. The prostate is located below the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it may slowly restrict the flow of urine. This can lead to symptoms such as:

- a weak or interrupted urinary stream
- a feeling that you cannot empty your bladder completely
- a feeling of delay or hesitation when you [illegible] to urinate
- a need to urinate often, especially at night
- a feeling that you must urinate right away.

Treatment options for BPH

There are three main treatment options for BPH:

- **Program of monitoring or "Watchful Waiting".** If a man has an enlarged prostate gland and no symptoms or if his symptoms do not bother him, he and his doctor may decide on a program of monitoring which would include regular checkups, [illegible] medication or surgery.
- **Medication.** Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR for BPH. See **"What PROSCAR does"** below.
- **Surgery.** Some patients may need surgery. Your doctor can describe several different surgical procedures for BPH. Which procedure is best depends on your symptoms and medical condition.

What PROSCAR does

PROSCAR lowers levels of a key hormone called DHT (dihydrotestosterone), which is a major cause of prostate growth. Lowering DHT leads to shrinkage of the enlarged prostate gland in most men. This can lead to gradual improvement in urine flow and symptoms over the next several months. However, [illegible] BPH will be different, you should know that:

- Even though the prostate shrinks, you may NOT see an improvement in urine flow or symptoms.
- You may need to take PROSCAR for six (6) months or more to see whether it helps you.
- Even though you take PROSCAR and it may help you, it is not known whether PROSCAR reduces the need for surgery.

What you need to know while taking PROSCAR

- **You must see your doctor regularly.** While taking PROSCAR, you must have regular checkups. Follow your doctor's advice [illegible]
- **About side effects.** Like all prescription drugs, PROSCAR may cause side effects. Side effects due to PROSCAR may include impotence (or inability to have an erection) and less desire for sex. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 4% of patients in clinical studies. In some cases side effects went away while the patient continued to take PROSCAR.

Some men taking PROSCAR® (Finasteride) may have a decrease in the amount of semen released during sex. This decrease does not appear to interfere with normal sexual function.

You should discuss side effects with your doctor before taking PROSCAR and anytime you think you are having a side effect.

- **Checking for prostate cancer.** Your doctor has prescribed PROSCAR for symptomatic BPH and not for cancer—but a man can have BPH and prostate cancer at the same time. Doctors usually recommend that men be checked for prostate cancer once a year when they turn 50 (or 40 if a family member has had prostate cancer). These checks should continue while you take PROSCAR. PROSCAR is not a treatment for prostate cancer.
- **About prostate specific antigen (PSA).** Your doctor may have done a blood test called PSA. PROSCAR can alter PSA values. For more information, talk to your doctor.
- **A warning about PROSCAR and pregnancy.**

PROSCAR is for use by MEN only.

PROSCAR is generally well tolerated in men. However, women who are pregnant, or women who could become pregnant, should avoid the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

If the active ingredient is absorbed by a woman who is pregnant with a male baby, it may cause the male baby to be born with abnormalities of the sex organs. Therefore, any woman who is pregnant or who could become pregnant must not come into direct contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

Two of the ways in which a woman might absorb the active ingredient in PROSCAR are:

Sexual contact. Your semen may contain a small amount of the active ingredient of the drug. If your partner is pregnant, or if you and your partner decide to have a baby, you must stop taking PROSCAR and talk to your doctor. If your partner could become pregnant, proper use of a condom can reduce the risk of exposing her to your semen (discuss this further with your doctor).

Handling broken tablets. Women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant must not handle broken tablets of PROSCAR.

PROSCAR tablets are coated to prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling. If this coating is broken, the tablets should not be handled by women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant.

If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR, a doctor should be consulted. Remember, these warnings apply only if the woman exposed to PROSCAR is pregnant or could become pregnant.

How to take PROSCAR

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take PROSCAR. You must take it every day. You may take it with or between meals. To avoid forgetting to take PROSCAR, it may be helpful to take it the same time every day.

Do not share PROSCAR with anyone else; it was prescribed only for you.

Keep PROSCAR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR AND BPH, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

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West Point, PA 19486
JBP035701-PSA761

The professor is quite corre[illegible] though, when he says we are confus[illegible] about our priorities. Health-care [illegible] form may be a central concern for t[illegible] majority of our people, but it is har[illegible] our first priority. Education of t[illegible] young and support for the prima[illegible] cultural crucible from which it gro[illegible] —the family—is the real priority.

Ken Whelan
San Francisco

For the past four years I've been ser[illegible] ing in inner-urban Oakland and S[illegible] Francisco teaching America's unde[illegible] class. What I've been trying to d[illegible] against all odds, is to develop educ[illegible] tional strategies appropriate to the ov[illegible] whelming needs of at-risk urban you[illegible] and others who have been ruthless[illegible] disenfranchised but have remarkab[illegible] potential: educational triage for tho[illegible] traumatized in capitalism's killing fiel[illegible] My students are African America[illegible] Native American, Asian America[illegible] Mexican American . . . and poor—v[illegible] tually every one is them is poor.

Barber contends that the nation[illegible] not serious about education, and ye[illegible] have never seen a group of America[illegible] more interested in learning than m[illegible] charges are. Barber claims that Ame[illegible] ica is not committed to educating i[illegible] youth, but the teachers who work wit[illegible] those on the front line of the urba[illegible] reservation, those who ensure that th[illegible] *real work* of this country gets done—[illegible] put such a notion to shame. Barbe[illegible] holds that America is not serious abou[illegible] education; however, as an educator[illegible] have come to an inescapable conclu[illegible] sion: in addition to the groups jus[illegible] mentioned, at least one other is ver[illegible] serious about education—very seriou[illegible] that is, about making sure that pe[illegible] ple like my students *don't* get one. It[illegible] the cabal that reaps vast profits fro[illegible] maintaining the admittedly tricky ba[illegible] ance between its programs for cultu[illegible] al genocide, media control, an[illegible] engineering populations of highly ma[illegible] nipulable consumers, fodder for th[illegible] corporate elite. Make no mistake, th[illegible] conspiracy is real. If knowledge is pow[illegible] er—and it is—those who have powe[illegible] would be fools to jeopardize their po[illegible] sition by educating the demos.

William Weiss
San Francisco

NOTEBOOK

Dungeons and dragons

By Lewis H. Lapham

Perhaps in time the so-called Dark Ages will be thought of as including our own.
Lichtenberg

Late last summer I came across an essay in which Umberto Eco suggested a series of parallels between the late twentieth century and the early Middle Ages, and I remember being struck by the proposition because it explained, or at least provided me with a way to think about, phenomena as distant from one another as MTV, the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the transport of nuclear weapons by oxcart through the Caucasus Mountains, the apparition of H. Ross Perot, and the sales receipts of *Women Who Run With the Wolves*. Eco likened our own situation at the end of an age of empire to the predicament of Europe after the fall of Rome, and as I read what he had to say about the bewilderment of the tenth century—its faith in miracles and joyous profusion of jugglers and gargoyles, the savagery on the roads, and an aesthetic taste shaped by visual images instead of words—I recognized a sensibility and a dramatis personae remarkably well suited to a guest appearance on *Larry King Live*.

Eco's essay again came to mind in early December of last year when a Jamaican immigrant named Colin Ferguson (subsequently identified in the tabloid press as "bitter" and "taciturn") opened fire with a semi-automatic pistol on a Long Island commuter train, killing six people and wounding seventeen others, apparently with no purpose or motive other than the wish to express his feeling of resentment. The crime brought forth a buzzing swarm of newspaper sermons, and the *New York Times*, at the top of its op-ed page under the title "The Lunatic Blur," placed an essay by a Brooklyn writer named Eric Sante[illegible] not only that it was impossible to guess at Ferguson's motive [illegible] was pointless to worry about defending oneself against the occasional flurries of gunfire likely to drift through any city street. Incidents of murder belonged to the same order of events as wind in the trees or storms at sea. Assigning to a semi-automatic weapon the properties of "a magic wand" (presumably similar to the ones wielded by Merlin and Odo of Ghent), Sante recommended to his readers the comforts of "fatalism, imagination, humor and an understanding of probability." We all live, he said, "in tornado country or on windward islands." I admired the calm detachment of the sentiment, but I wondered why Sante didn't also invoke the blessing of the Virgin, the oath of Charlemagne, or the wizardry of elves.

Taking Sante's homily as a sign of a medieval intelligence at work behind the aluminum facades of advanced postmodernism, I understood that the spiritual and geopolitical map of what President George Bush had pronounced as the New World Order resembled the map of Europe during the First Crusade. At the State Department nobody still talks about "hegemony," and the more oracular trade and foreign-policy analysts (Japanese as well as Belgians and Russians) have begun to propose the division of the old nation states into smaller political entities (none consisting of more than 20 million people) centered on a river valley, a conjunction of textile mills, or a religious belief. The California legislature considers the prospect of dividing, like ancient Gaul, into three parts, and the citizens of Staten Island have voted to secede from the city of New York.

Maybe it was the disorder so alum[illegible] that accounted for Sante's indifference [illegible] bland a piety, and if I was to make [illegible] next week's serial murders in Queens, [illegible] from Roncesvalles and the monastery at Bec. To this end I assembled a few preliminary notes bringing forward Eco's observations into the present tense. As follows:

Lost and Found

The [illegible] city-states (among them Singapore and Dubai and Orange County, California), to militant causes (in Israel or Iran or Northern Ireland), to the judgment of armed bandits posted on the [illegible] Prince. The postmodern frontiers define markets and spheres of commercial interest, not the [illegible] states, or [illegible] Paris acquire the rank and dignity of [illegible] of international capitalism imitate the [illegible] an Italian noble might swear fealty to a German prince or a Norman duke [illegible] glish king.

The lords and barons of the small [illegible]

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castellans, knights-at-arms, seneschal[s], [wedding women] and the [illegible] depend upon a corporate overlord [illegible] only for the means but also for the [terms] of their existence, gradually [illegible] bargaining the rights of free [men] in return for a greyhound and a roc[k] with a view of the Rhine.

Res Publica

If the household servants of a co[r]porate fief feel no further need of po[l]itics, the general public translates th[e] practice of citizenship into the art [of] shopping. The buyers of politics as e[n]tertainment express their loyalty to [a] product rather than their obligation t[o] a principle or an idea. Perceived [a]s celebrities or as totems proving th[e] theorems of intellectual or social worth, politicians enter the inventory [of] brand-name merchandise that also en[-] compasses gold watches, record albums, foreign automobiles, and designer jeans. The customer selects miscellaneous items from various stores and cata[-]logues—a compact disc by Guns 'n' Roses, Elizabeth Taylor's perfume, a de[-]votion to Pat Buchanan's newspaper columns—and by so doing he or she composes the portrait of a preferred self. The aesthetic is playful and eclec[-]tic, and the assembly of magical ob[-]jects bears comparison to the medieval passion for collecting thorns from the cross of Jesus and feathers fallen from the wing of the archangel Gabriel.

Some years ago in a waterfront cafe in San Francisco I met the modern in[-]carnation of the medieval spirit in the person of a wandering scholar who knew how to read the secret runes stripped into the film work of Sting's music videos, but who thought of politics, especially national poli[-]tics, in the same way that he thought of cable television channels addressed to a special interest or a select audi[-]ence—i.e., as a diversion for the kind of middle-aged white man who watched C-Span or American Movie Classics. When I suggested that peo[-]ple who ignore politics do so at their peril, he said that he was thirty years old and the government, which he equated with the police, didn't know where he lived. Loyal to his pantheon of rock musicians and his first edition of *Finnegans Wake*, to the principle of the global supermarket and his tele-

vision set, he regarded himself as stateless, a citizen of an interdependent world bound to other people by an occasional purpose or a mutual advantage, not by a common history or a set of canonical texts.

Similar habits of mind make the markets for special-interest magazines, for Wall Street newsletters and narrowcast radio and television programming, for the L. L. Bean catalogue, for the scientific and academic jargons, for the obscure languages in which economists speak to economists and computer hackers send messages to one another on the Internet. Among people who offer their loyalties to a profession or a department store, the word "public" serves as a synonym for incompetence, weakness, and hypocrisy, and the idea of an American *res publica*—of the commonwealth preserved by the civic virtue of an informed citizenry—seems as distant as the silk road to Cathay.

Noble Lords

The politicians in Washington like to pretend that the federal government embodies the will and serves the interests of all the American people, but as the country continues to divide into a nation of the rich and a nation of the poor, the fictions of unity and democratic intent lose their capacity to command belief—fine words and phrases as foreign to the thought of Luc Sante as to the emotion of Colin Ferguson. The American oligarchy increasingly has less in common with the American people than it does with the equivalent oligarchies in Germany or Mexico or Japan. The hegemony of wealth assumes the ecumenical place once occupied by the medieval church, and within this favored estate everybody observes the same rituals and pays homage to the same princes. The yachts moored off Cannes or the Costa Brava sail under the flags of the same admiralty that posts squadrons off Miami and Newport Beach, and the American plutocrat traveling between the Ritz Hotel in Paris and Claridge's Hotel in London crosses not into another country but into another province of what has become the latter-day Christendom.

The possessing classes recline at their ease behind the barbicans of a [illegible] computers and fax machines and mega-trends and cellular phones. On the other side of the wall, [illegible] the desolate heaths of the third, fifth, and ninth worlds, the nomadic bands of the heathen poor, known to the French policy journals as "the terminally impoverished," tear at one another for bones.

Anybody still uncertain on the point had only to listen to last autumn's debate in Congress on the topic of the North American Free Trade Agreement. The treaty ratified a feudal redisposition of the serfs in both the United States and Mexico, and the voices speaking on its behalf were those of a stateless oligarchy—the corporations, the Wall Street banks, the big media—that felt as little allegiance to the United States as the pilgrim on the shores of San Francisco Bay. Proposed by a Republican president and heartily seconded by a Democratic president, the treaty favored the privilege of capital over the rights of labor, and the vote divided along the lines of class interest rather than political difference.

Camelot

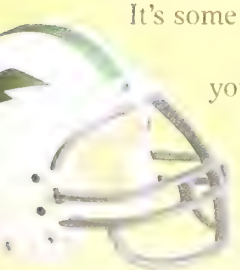
The broad retreat to the suburbs over the last twenty or thirty years has given rise to the building of residential enclaves not unlike the walled towns and feudal manors of medieval Europe. The real-estate offerings published in the better magazines invariably locate the great, good American place at the end of a long driveway, over a bridge, beyond a gatehouse, surrounded if not by moats and battlements then at least by lawns, beachfront, weight sensors, golf courses, and a pack of savage dogs. In place of men-at-arms, the commercial nobility hires garrisons of private police and sets up defensive perimeters of spiked hedges and saturation floodlights. Although I expect that by now the prices have become a good deal more extravagant, I know that as recently as 1990 the nation's more affluent citizens spent $52 billion for various calibers of [illegible] the same year all the governments in America (federal, state, county, and municipal) allocated only $37 billion to public law enforcement.

The medieval spirit delighted in [illegible] storytellers didn't draw distinctions between fiction and non-fiction, and, [illegible] rhymes and toys like'y to please the mind of a child. Of the cathedral they made what Eco called "the great book in stone," the alphabet of visual images that explained, in carvings and stained glass and gold ornaments encrusted with jewels, "the nations of the earth . . . the days of the year, the seasons of sowing and reaping, the mysteries of the faith."

We require the same explanations from the television screen. News is entertainment and entertainment is news, and in the little books of digital light we watch the birth of stars and the death of kings. The theater of celebrity, in which the television networks present Caribbean hurricanes and African wars, replaces the old religious theater in which God staged cataclysmic floods and heavenly fires. Like the annotators of medieval bestiaries, the mass media grant the primacy of the personal over the impersonal. On television commercials and subway signs, athletes breathe the gift of life into whatever products can be carried into a locker room, and aging movie actresses awaken with their "personal touch" the spirit dormant in the color of a lipstick or a bottle of perfume.

The greater images of celebrity posed on the covers of our magazines impart a sense of stability and calm to a world otherwise dissolved in chaos. The newspaper headlines bring word of violent change—war in Bosnia, near anarchy in Moscow, famine in Soma[illegible] the [illegible] of the magazines the faces look as vacant and [illegible] twenty years, as serene as the stone [illegible] cathedral. There they all are—Liz and Elvis, Madonna and the Kennedys—[illegible] bestowing on the confusion of events the smiles of infinite bliss. ■





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HARPER'S INDEX

Ratio of the murder rate last year in New York City to the murder rate in Singapore : 2

Ratio of the murder rate in states without a death penalty to the murder rate in states with a death penalty : 1

Chances that an American teenager believes he or she will live to be 100 : 1 in 3

Chances that an American believes "there isn't much government can do to stop crime" : 1 in 3

Change in the number of monthly political deaths in the Occupied Territories since the Israeli-PLO peace accord was signed : 1

Number of pogroms against Gypsies carried out in Romania in 1991 : 10

Percentage change, since 1992, in U.N. members abstaining from a vote to condemn Israeli human-rights abuses : –

Number of U.S. soldiers who identify themselves as Muslims : 2,500

Number of words in the new *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* that are Japanese : 2,500

Percentage change, since 1990, in the frequency with which the word "penis" has appeared in the *New York Times* : +100

Number of ABC affiliates that refuse to air *NYPD Blue* : 44

Percentage change, since 1989, in street-gang membership in Denver, Colorado : +2,900

Chances that a white teenager arrested on drug charges will be transferred to an adult court : 1 in 70

Chances that a black teenager arrested on drug charges will be : 1 in 18

Estimated percentage change, since 1988, in the number of U.S. children enrolled in martial-arts classes : +40

Average number of infants abandoned in U.S. hospitals each month last year : 1,000

Chances that a supermarket customer in an express checkout line has more than the allowed number of items : 1 in 4

Percentage of Avon purchases in Patrocino, Brazil, that are paid for in gold dust : 90

Number of animals a Moscow circus left on a Japanese dock in 1992 to make room on its ship for newly bought cars : 93

Price, per flight, of co-piloting a Su-27 Russian fighter jet with a former Soviet test pilot, from MIGS etc. of Florida : $9,000

Price paid at auction last December for an unused urine bag carried on the Soyuz 22 Soviet space flight : $1,035

Number of parking tickets given to former Soviet embassy employees in Washington, D.C., that remain unpaid : 50,693

Number of American cars Ford's new president, Alex Trotman, has bought in his lifetime : 0

Weeks after his arrest for shoplifting last year that a former secretary of the army was hired as a Pentagon consultant : 12

Number of golf courses maintained by the Pentagon, worldwide : 234

Percentage change in the value of Euro Disney stock since the park opened in 1992 : –350

Issues of *Mad* the magazine will give Prince Charles this year for winning its Alfred E. Neuman Look-Alike Contest : 12

Royalty paid to Charles Manson for each T-shirt bearing his likeness sold by Zooport Riot Gear in California : 10¢

Price of an "authentic, preworn" plaid flannel shirt by mail order from Blowhole Productions of Seattle : $20

Estimated annual spending on medical treatment for foot deformities caused by women's ill-fitting shoes : $2,000,000

Year in which the South Korean government stopped defining footwashing at barbershops as an "act of lechery" : 1993

Price of a one-page "Florid to Torrid" love letter, from New York City's Do the Write Thing : $25

Estimated number of recruitment letters sent by U.S.C.'s basketball coach last spring to prospect Avoundre Jones : 500

Number of undelivered invitations to Clinton's Inaugural discovered in an Arkansas warehouse in December : 49

Ratio of 1993 sales of *Hillary: Her True Story* to sales of *The Life and Career of Bill Clinton* : 3.2

Percentage of all U.S. paperback-book sales accounted for by romance novels : 47

Amount a Chicago woman won last year after suing her former fiancé for breaking their 7-week engagement : $178,000

Amount a California man won last year after suing his wife for feigning sexual attraction to him for 13 years : $242,000

Ratio of the incidence of intentional head-banging among infant boys to the incidence among infant girls : 3:1

Figures cited are the latest available as of December 1993.

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The Mazda 929. In a category of automobile where [illegible] often selfishly monopolizes the attention, [illegible] is one luxury sedan that's surprisingly sensitive to the needs of its driver. ✲ The Mazda 929. ✲ Thanks to an available Solar Powered Ventilation System that helps cool the cabin while it's parked, the 929 makes you feel welcome from the moment you get in. ✲ Driver's- and passenger's-side air bags are ready to help protect you on the road. ✲ Why, it even remembers to defog the windows when you turn on the windshield wipers. ✲ Of course, the 929 also offers the unflustered performance that discerning drivers expect from a fine car. The engine, with 193 horsepower, is generous. And the suspension thoughtfully adapts to cope with the alternating demands of monotonous interstate or treacherous, serpentine back roads. ✲ So before you purchase a luxury sedan, we urge you to give some serious thought to the Mazda 929. After all, it would do the same for you.

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READINGS

[Report]

HOW THE FBI HELPED FUEL THE WACO FIRE

From "Report and Recommendations Concerning the Handling of Incidents Such As the Branch Davidian Standoff in Waco Texas," by Alan A. Stone, a professor of psychiatry and law at Harvard University. Stone was one of ten unpaid experts selected last June by Deputy Attorney General Philip B. Heymann to review the FBI's handling of the siege on the Branch Davidian compound. The Justice Department's investigation was divided into three parts: the first, a "factual investigation" by department officials; the second, an evaluation of the FBI's conduct by Edward Dennis, an assistant attorney general in the Bush Administration; and the third, reports by the ten outside experts. In late July, Stone filed a preliminary report with the attorney general's office, stating that Justice officials were preventing panelists from making factual inquiries on the grounds that such inquiries would interfere with the department's own investigation. Stone received no response; in early September, he heard that the nine other members of the outside panel were about to submit their reports. When Stone called Heymann to ask if he had been dropped from the panel, Heymann suggested, according to Stone, that Stone wait to make further inquiries until after the Justice investigation was complete, and issue his report at a later date. The department released its report on October 8; it included statements from the nine remaining outside experts and the conclusion by Edward Dennis that the FBI "exhibited extraordinary restraint and handled this crisis with great professionalism." Stone's report, excerpted below, was submitted to Heymann on November 8.

In creating its report, the Justice Department sifted through a mountain of information. The evidence overwhelmingly proves that David Koresh and the Branch Davidians set the fire and killed themselves in the conflagration at Waco, which fulfilled their apocalyptic prophecy. My report does not question that conclusion; instead, my concern is whether the FBI actions were in some way culpable in the [illegible] in the death of twenty-five innocent children along with many adults. The department's factual investigation of the [illegible] the ground, who is convinced that nothing the FBI could have done would have changed the outcome. That is not my impression.

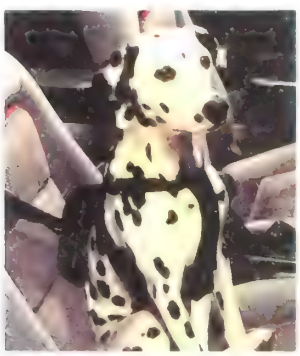
On the evening of Thursday, February 25, the morning of March 1, the FBI replaced the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms [ATF] at the Branch Davidian compound. There had been casualties on both sides during the ATF's unsuccessful "dynamic entry." David Koresh, the leader of the Branch Davidians, had been shot through the hip, and the situation was in flux.

During the first phase of the FBI's engagement at Waco, a period of a few days, the agents on the ground at the compound proceeded with [illegible] had the approval and understanding of the entire chain of command. In the view of the negotiators [illegible] —for example, some adults and children came out of the compound—but David Koresh and the Branch Davidians made many promises to the negotiators that they then did not keep. Pushed by the tactical leader, the FBI's command [illegible] dition to negotiation, e.g., turning off the electricity [illegible] as cold as the agents outside during the twenty-[illegible] negotiations [illegible] tentially fatal consequences of using such measures.

A CATALOGUE OF WOES

mail-order company in White Plains, New York

parent is to have a child stray away unnoticed in public. The [illegible] is unobtrusive, [illegible] electronic transmitter, a [illegible] that helps parents locate children in a mall, park, store, or just about anywhere. Your child wears the receiver [illegible] on the [illegible] pouch provided. You carry the [illegible] transmitter. In the event that you and your child are separated, the Locatakid gives you three options to help you find your child: Locate, Search, and Alarm. It can [illegible] your location up to 200 feet. $69.95



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By March 21, the FBI was concentrating on tactical pressure alone: first, by using all-out psycho-physiological warfare intended to stress and intimidate the Branch Davidians; and second, by "tightening the noose" with a circle of armored vehicles. The FBI considered these efforts a success because no shots were fired at them by the Branch Davidians.

This changing negotiation strategy at the compound from (1) conciliatory negotiating to (2) negotiation and tactical pressure and then to (3) tactical pressure alone evolved over the objections of the FBI's own experts. When the fourth and ultimate strategy, the insertion of C.S. gas [tear gas] into the compound, was presented to Attorney General Janet Reno, the FBI had abandoned any serious effort to reach a negotiated solution and was well along in its strategy of all-out tactical pressure, thereby leaving little choice as to how to end the Waco standoff. By the time the attorney general made her decision, the noose was closed and, as one agent told me, the FBI believed they had "three options—gas, gas, and gas."

There is, to my mind, unequivocal evidence that the Branch Davidians set the compound on fire themselves and ended their lives on David Koresh's order. However, I am now convinced that the FBI's noose-tightening tactics may well have precipitated Koresh's decision to commit himself and his followers to this course of mass suicide.

There is a wealth of criminology, behavioral-science, and psychiatric literature on the subject of murder followed by suicide that indicates that these behaviors and the mental states that motivate them have very important and complicated links. Even more important is what has been called the "gamble with death." For example, inner-city youths often provoke a shoot-out, "gambling" with death by provoking police into killing them. In the case of the Branch Davidians, there was direct empirical evidence supporting the assumption that those at the compound, because of their own unconventional beliefs, were in the "gamble with death" mode. The evidence for this was their response to the ATF's misguided assault. The ATF claims gunfire came from forty different locations. If true, this means that at least forty Branch Davidians were willing to shoot at federal agents and kill or be killed [illegible] suicide victims defending their "faith." The FBI's behavioral-science unit realized that Koresh and his followers were in a desperate kill-or-be-killed mode. They were also well aware of the significance and meaning of the Branch Davidians' apocalyptic faith. They understood that David Koresh interpreted law-enforcement attacks as related to the prophesied



apocalyptic ending. Their belief that [illegible] those beliefs, expecting the apocalypse, would submit to tactical pressure [illegible] flies in the face of their behavior during the ATF raid.

In deciding to move to a show-of-force tactical strategy, the FBI made the critical assumption that [illegible] Davidians would respond to pressure in the form of a closing circle of armed vehicles by concluding that survival was in their self-interest and surrendering. This ill-[illegible] relevant behavioral-science and psychiatric literature as well as the [illegible] offered of David Koresh and the Branch Davidians.

The ATF investigation report [illegible] try turned into what is described as being "ambiguous" [illegible] mind and behavior of the people in the compound [illegible] tions were considered an "ambush" troubled me. If they were militants determined to ambush and kill [illegible] me that given their firepower, the devastation would have been even worse. They apparently did not maximize the number of ATF agents killed. This comports with all of the state-of-mind evidence [illegible] were neither depressed, suicidal people nor desperate religious fanatics expecting an apocalyptic ending, in which they were destined to

The psychology of such behavior [illegible] Davidians was mistakenly evaluated, if not

T

field of [illegible]

FBI lacked expertise in behavioral science or in [redacted] criminal religious groups. Rather, the commander on the ground and others committed to tactical-aggressive, traditional law enforcement practices disregarded those experts and tried to assert control and demonstrate to Koresh that they were in charge. There is nothing surprising or esoteric in this explanation, nor does it arise only from the clear wisdom of hindsight. The FBI's own experts recognized and predicted in memoranda that there was the risk that the active, aggressive law-enforcement mentality of the FBI—the so-called action imperative—would prevail in the face of frustration and delay. They warned that, in these circumstances, there might be tragic consequences from the FBI's "action imperative." They were correct.

[Memo]

REGULATION'S SILVER LINING

From a memo sent last August by Barry Marshall, chief operating officer of TCI Cable Management Corp., a subsidiary of TCI, the nation's largest cable operator, to the company's executives and managers. Last spring, new congressional regulations went into effect that allow local governments to regulate cable prices, forcing some cable companies to cut their basic rates.

As we move into the regulatory environment, it's important to remember something vital. Under regulation, we can't simply adjust our economics anymore. We have to take our revenue from the sources that we can, when we can. [redacted] tell you that the transaction charges for upgrades, downgrades, customer-caused service calls, VCR hookups, etc., are vital new revenue sources for us. By charging for these functions, we can recover almost half of what we're losing from rate adjustments.

We have to have discipline. We *cannot* be dissuaded from the charges simply because customers object. It will take a while, but they'll get used to [redacted] like the phone company—all the time!

Please hang in on this and we can still have a great fourth quarter. The best news of all is now we can blame the charges on regulation and the government. Let's take advantage of it.

[Report]

RON BROWN'S HAITI POLICY: THE EARLY YEARS

From a report sent in November 1983 by Ron Brown to then-President Jean-Claude (Baby Doc) Duvalier of Haiti. Brown, who is now the secretary of commerce, was writing as a partner of Patton, Boggs & Blow, the Washington law firm that the Duvalier government had hired in 1982 to lobby Congress. A 1983 Amnesty International report had cited Duvalier's regime for acts of torture, arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and "disappearances." In 1986, faced with growing public protests, Duvalier fled Haiti, having amassed a fortune estimated at more than $200 million. Brown has downplayed his ties with Duvalier; in 1989, after he was appointed chairman of the Democratic Party, Brown said at a news conference that he "never had any involvement either on a client basis or any other basis with the [Duvalier] family." The memo, which has never before been made public, appears in the December 1993 issue of Counterpunch, *a Washington, D.C., newsletter sponsored by the Institute for Policy Studies. Translated from the French by Jim Nelson.*

STATUS OF ACTIVITIES

ATTENTION: President Jean-Claude Duvalier
SUBMITTED BY: Ronald H. Brown

Over the last few months, we have undertaken quite a few projects on behalf of the Republic of Haiti. This report will try to sum up the main activities under way and those planned for the coming months.

Relations With Congress

We continue to dedicate considerable time to improving relations between the Republic of Haiti and members of the U.S. Congress, with the goal of substantially increasing American aid to Haiti.

Despite the unfair image of Haiti portrayed by the American media, and despite the opposition expressed by some members of Congress, I can assure you that today, as never before, a growing number of people—both members of Congress and government officials—stand ready to defend the interests of Haiti. This, as I see it, is essentially due to the work of our Washington team.

We continue to pay a great deal of attention to the Black Caucus and to other "liberal" members of Congress. The leader of the Black Caucus, Representative Julian Dixon, has been extremely positive and has helped us a great deal; also, a large number of "liberal" members of the House of Representatives and of the Senate are now, thanks to our efforts, ready to help. Although some of them continue to make neg-

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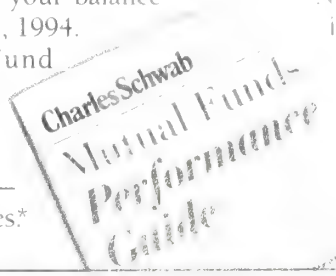


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ative comments about Haiti, all, without ex-

[illegible]

[illegible] Members of Congress, it can change their concrete actions regarding and to Haiti.

[illegible] us who represent Haiti here in Washington day [illegible] the future. In other words, we have to put the emphasis on "What are you prepared to do to help us?" rather than on "What have you said about us in the past?"

[illegible]

As you know, in order to assure the protection of Haiti's long-term interests, it is essential that [illegible] relations with presidential candidates. To that effect, while we've always [illegible] excellent relations with the government of President Reagan, we've set out to establish personal contacts with virtually all of the Democratic candidates, thereby ensuring access to the White House regardless of who wins in 1984.

My current role as deputy chairman of the [illegible] Committee has served us well in these efforts, while my contacts with my counterparts in the Republican Party assure continued access and excellent relations with the government of President Reagan.



[illegible]

As you can see, Mr. President, there is much to do, but we have certainly made a lot of progress. As we said during our first conversations thirteen months ago, changes in attitude and, even more crucial, an aid program won't happen overnight. However, there's a lot of evidence now that we're on the right track.

[Script Suggestions]

THE SENSITIVE SCREENWRITER

From Spotlight on Depiction of Health and Social Issues: A Resource Encyclopedia for the Entertainment Community, *published last fall by the Entertainment Industries Council, a nonprofit organization whose trustees include Laurence A. Tisch, Aaron Spelling and Barry Diller. The encyclopedia, which is distributed to television and film writers and directors, features lists of "depiction suggestions" for writers to consult when addressing issues such as drugs, alcohol, AIDS, and children of alcoholics. The guide states that the lists "are not meant to limit the creative process" but instead are intended to reinforce "the tradition of our industries to create dreams, trigger emotions, and help humankind explore a world that is better than the headlines would lead us to believe."*

TERMINOLOGY FOR ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

- To emphasize that alcohol is a drug, please use a phrase such as "the abuse of alcohol and other drugs" rather than "substance abuse."
- There is risk associated with all alcohol or drug use. Therefore, please refer simply to "use" rather than "responsible use."
- The term "use" should be employed when referring to alcohol consumption by people who should not drink alcohol: youth, pregnant women, recovering alcoholics, and operators of motor vehicles.
- "Mood-altering" tends to be a weak and inaccurate description of the powerful effect that drugs have on the mind. It is recommended that the phrase "mind-altering" be used.
- In order to focus attention on circumstances and environments, the phrases "youth at risk for alcohol and other drug use" and "youth in high-risk environments" are preferable to the phrase "high-risk youth."
- When referring to illicit drugs, please do not describe them as "hard" or "soft," because these terms can imply that some drugs are virtually harmless.
- Since a person does not need to be drunk to be physically impaired, it is suggested that a



GRAND FRISCO.

phrase such as "alcohol-impaired driving" be substituted for "drunk driving."

• [illegible] when referring to [illegible] collision suggests the incident could not have been prevented or that no one was at fault. Use of the word "crash" (i.e., "drug-related crash" or "alcohol-related crash") is preferred.

CAR-SAFETY AWARENESS

• Safety-belt messages can be incorporated subtly through dialogue and sight gags.

• Buckling up can be specified in descriptions of driving scenes.

• Buckling up can contribute an extra dimension to characters and define their motivation and behavior, perhaps conveying an obsession or idiosyncrasy.

• It's a fact: many more police officers are killed or injured in car crashes than in shootings or assaults. Consider demonstrating this by depicting officers receiving severe or fatal injuries in crashes rather than assaults.

• As air bags become increasingly commonplace, you may want to consider having your safety-belted characters who survive crashes be saved by air-bag devices.

[Press Release]

CAPITOL RECORDS GOES GANGSTA

From a press release issued last October by Capitol Records to promote Gangsta Lean, *the debut album by DRS (Dirty Rotten Scoundrels), an R&B group.*

DRS's album, *Gangsta Lean*, is a slice of the average day in the hood and insight into the mind of the endangered young black male. You can't be soft in the world DRS talks about. That explains the song "Mama Don't Raise No Punks." This song is about a nigga who "doesn't care about dying" for what he believes in, whether it be his right-hand man, his mama, or taking out some other nigga for messin' with his woman. It [illegible] even the gold digging hoochie who, even though she is out spending her man's ends ($$$), is also out watchin' his back. "Hell Yeah" she's down for her nigga, down to be his partner and hold his glock (gun) or yayo (dope). [illegible] when he grabs the back of her head and says "Make It Rough" for me tonight. Not only do the DRS men play ball hard and talk hard, they also knock the boots [have sex] with the same ruff neck attitude.

That attitude is also conveyed in "Strip," a song about what is called "Sexual Aggravated Assault" for the white-collar individual, but for the Black man is always called rape. It's about a girl who decides in the middle of the act or after sex [illegible] to give up the poon [illegible] no more or that she never did want to give [illegible] up the song that [illegible] eventually raped but about those who lied. There are a lot of innocent men locked up because some girls, for [illegible]

This hard-core debut is like CNN, or rather an "RNN" (Real Nigga News), for the world. If you walk away from this "broadcast" without having gained some insight into what it's really like in the hood, then you missed the whole muthafuckin' point. And that may be the worst crime of all.

[Memoir]

LITTLE RED GUARD

From Red Azalea, *by Anchee Min, to be published this month by Pantheon. Min, who was born in 1957, grew up in China during the Cultural Revolution. At her elementary school in Shanghai, she was the leader of the Little Red Guards, a group of students selected for their devotion to the Communist Party. Min left China in 1984 and now lives in Chicago.*

In school I was at the head of the class on the history of the Communist Party of China. To me, history meant how proletarians won over reactionaries. We hung portraits of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin next to Mao in our classrooms. Each morning we bowed to them. I always began my compositions with this: "The East wind is blowing, the fighting drum is beating. Who is afraid in the world today? It is not the people who are afraid of American imperialists. It is the American imperialists who are afraid of the people." These phrases won me prizes.

The school's party secretary, a man named Chain, was a workers' representative from the Shanghai Shipping Factory. He was about fifty years old and extremely thin, like a bamboo stick. In the first week of November 1970, he called me into his office. I was thirteen. He told me excitedly that the committee had finally rooted out a hidden class enemy, an American spy. He said, We are going to have a meeting against her, a rally that two thousand people will attend. You will be the student representative to speak against





"Ningen Noren" (left) and "Happy Snooze" (right) [illegible] ciety. The society, which has 2,500 members, [illegible] the two are unnecessary yet functional. "Happy Snooze" [illegible] or she naps. "Ningen Noren" is designed to prevent sleeping riders from missing their stop; the writing on the scroll states the rider's destination so that fellow passengers can wake the [illegible]

an ongoing series on Kawakami's work in the Tokyo Journal

her. I asked who it was. Wrinkling his eyebrows, the secretary said a shocking name: Autumn Leaves, my teacher. I thought I heard Secretary Chain wrong. But he nodded at me slowly, confirming that I heard him exactly right.

Autumn Leaves was a thin, middle-aged woman. She wore a pair of dark glasses and had a hoarse voice and a short temper. She loved Chinese, mathematics, and music. She never seemed to tire of teaching. Once she completely lost her voice while trying to explain geometric progression to me. When she finally made me understand, she laughed silently like a mute with her arms dancing in the air. When I thanked her, she said that she was glad that I was serious about learning. She set me up as an example for our class and then the entire grade. When she knew that I wanted to improve my Chinese, she brought me her own books to read. She was this way with all of her students.

For the next two hours Secretary Chain worked to convince me that Autumn Leaves was a secret agent of the imperialists and was using teaching as a weapon to destroy our minds. He told me the fable of "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing." He said Autumn Leaves was the wolf. He told me that Autumn Leaves's father was a Chinese-American who [illegible] said. The capitalist sent his daughter back to China to [illegible] asked whether I would tolerate that. Of course not, I said. Secretary, please tell me what to do. He said, Write a speech. Tell the masses how you were mentally poisoned. I told Secretary Chain that I [illegible] and said, Mao would be very proud [illegible]

Pull [illegible] spy Autumn Leaves! Expose her under the bare [illegible] onto the stage. Her arms were twisted behind her. Only a few days had passed since I had last [illegible] portrait three times. One of the men bent her left arm very hard and said, Beg Chairman Mao for [illegible] ward. Autumn Leaves's face contorted in pain



"The Blacks of Mulheim," from Cologne Tribes: People, Myths, Masquerade, *by Petra Hartmann, Stephan Schmitz, and Matthias Heiner, published by Vista Point, in Cologne, Germany. Every year at Carnival, a festival in honor of the coming of Lent, the residents of the Cologne region dress up as people of other races and cultures, including Vikings, cowboys, Scots, and African warriors. The photographs in* Cologne Tribes *were featured in the October 6, 1993, issue of* in: German-American Cultural Review, *published in Bonn.*

My mouth was terribly dry, but I joined the chant, Long live the great proletarian dictatorship!

to face the sky. Her eyeglasses fell off.

The crowd shouted, Confess! Confess! Secre- masses would not have much patience and that

turd, she said that she had nothing to confess. She said she was innocent. Our party never ac- Chuan. He said it was now time to demonstrate me and turned to the crowd. He said, Let's have

wolf in sheep's clothing. I took out the books she loaned me and showed them to the crowd. I saw from the corner of my eye that Autumn Leaves had turned her head in my direction. She was murmuring. Comrades, I said, now I understand why Autumn Leaves was so kind to me. She was trying to turn me into an enemy of our country, a running dog of the imperialists!

There was some slogan-shouting from the crowd, during which I secretly glanced at Autumn Leaves. She was breathing hard and seemed about to fall. I stood, my limbs turning cold. I was terrified when I saw her staring at me without her eyeglasses. Her eyes looked like two Ping-Pong balls popping out of their sockets.

The crowd shouted, Confess! Confess! Autumn Leaves began to speak slowly to the crowd with her hoarse voice. She said that she would never want to turn any of her students into the country's enemy. She broke into tears. Why would I? she repeated again and again. She said that her father loved this country and that was the reason she came back to teach. Both her father and she believed in education. Spy? she said. What are you talking about? Where did you get this idea?

If the enemy doesn't surrender, let's boil her,

fry her, and burn her to death!' Secretary Chain shouted. The crowd shouted and waved their fists. Secretary Chain signaled for me to go on. But I was trembling too hard to continue. Secretary Chain took over the microphone. He ordered Autumn Leaves to shut up and accept the criticism of the revolutionary masses with a correct attitude. Autumn Leaves said that she could not accept any lies. Autumn Leaves said that a young girl like me should not be used by someone with evil intentions.

You underestimated our Little Red Guard's political awareness, Secretary Chain said with a scornful laugh. Autumn Leaves demanded to speak to me. Secretary Chain told her to go ahead.

As the crowd quieted down, Autumn Leaves started to question me. I was scared. I did not expect that she would talk to me so seriously. Autumn Leaves asked if I really believed that she was an enemy of the country. If I did not think so, could I tell her who assigned me to do the speech. She said she wanted the truth. She said Chairman Mao always liked to have children show their honesty. She asked me in the exact same tone she used when she helped me with my homework. Her eyes were forcing me to focus on hers, but I could not bear to look. When I won first place in the Calculation With Abacus Competition, her eyes had looked at me with joy; when I was ill, they had looked at me with sympathy and love.

I heard people shouting at me. My head felt like a boiling teapot. Autumn Leaves's eyes now were like gun barrels shooting fire at me. Just be honest! she said, her hoarse voice raised to its extreme. I turned to Secretary Chain. He was smiling scornfully. Think about the snake, he said.

Yes, the snake, I remembered. It was a story Mao told in his book. It was about a peasant who found a frozen snake lying in his path on a snowy day. The snake had the most beautiful skin the peasant had ever seen. He felt sorry for her and decided to save her life. He picked up the snake and put her into his jacket to warm her with the heat of his body. Soon the snake woke up and felt hungry. She bit her savior. The peasant died.

I turned to look at the wall-size portrait of Mao. It was mounted on the back of the stage. The chairman's eyes looked like two swinging lanterns. I was reminded of my duty. I must fight against anyone who dared to oppose Mao's teaching.

Secretary Chain passed me the microphone. I did not know why I was crying. I heard myself calling for my parents as I took the microphone. I said, Mama, Papa, where are you? The crowd waved their angry fists at me and shouted, Down! Down! Down! I was so scared, scared of not being able to denounce Autumn Leaves and scared of losing Secretary Chain's trust. Finally, I gathered all my strength and yelled hysterically at Autumn Leaves with tears in my throat: Yes, I do believe that you are a true enemy! Your

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

GIVING THE GIFT OF HUMILIATION

Humiliation and Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence, by William Ian Miller, is [illegible] at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

It was around six in the evening. At the door were Bobby, the four-year-old boy who lived around the corner with his mother, Mary Beth Kelly, answered the door, and seeing that they had a valentine for Bess, our three-year-old daughter, [illegible] had had Bess [illegible] on Bobby was not a very frequent playmate of Bess's, and we were on standoffish though cordial terms with his parents. What luck, I thought, that Kathy had thought to have something ready for the boy. [illegible] What Bobby handed over to Bess was an expensive doll, some twenty dollars' worth, clearly bought for this occasion. What Bess handed Bobby was some scribbling, representing an attempt to draw a heart, and a cookie that my wife, with Bess's indispensable assistance, [illegible] that afternoon.

It was approaching dinnertime when they arrived, and the visit broke up quickly after the exchange. There was an undeniable look of disappointment on the boy's face when he left; Bess, though hardly disappointed, was mildly bewildered at having gotten such a nice gift out of the blue. As soon as the door closed, my wife expressed her embarrassment and acute discomfort, [illegible] What could we do? How could we [illegible] Of course, academic that I am, I started immediately wondering why we felt so embarrassed, maybe even shamed, whereas Bobby's mother hadn't displayed any sense at all that something [illegible]

The structure of the valentine exchange may be described as a simple game. The players have [illegible] without knowledge of what the other player's move [illegible] exchange does not mean getting the best present. In this case, Kathy and I understood that to be a loss. Winning is guessing what the other will [illegible] cultural norms do the work of coordinating people's [illegible] norms pass without a glitch. We know what to give and how much to spend, and we reasonably expect that others know what we know and that they will act accordingly. But when those norms aren't recognized, embarrassment sets in (though it is rarely distributed equally between the two parties). Why was it that my wife and I, who followed the norms governing the situation, felt greater discomfort than was shown by Bobby's mother, who clearly broke the rules by vastly exceeding the appropriate expenditure for little kids on Valentine's Day?

The true source of our embarrassment is that we had been shamed by being bested in the more primitive game of gift exchange. In this game, gifts create obligation more viscerally than even contracts do. By giving someone something, you make the recipient your debtor, thereby constraining the person to make petty shows of gratitude and deference until the repayment is made. The simple fact is that a gift demands an adequate return, even if that gift, by its size, breaks the rules governing the particular exchange. In our case, the norms of adequate reciprocity trumped the norms of Valentine's Day.

The discussion above assumes high-roller and low-roller to be individual actors in a one-on-one game, but in our valentine situation there were mother and son on one side and mother and daughter on the other. If we look now only at the emotions engendered by the exchange, Bobby's mother felt no shame and only a little embarrassment. Bess's mother felt much embarrassment. Bess felt quite pleased. But Bobby—alas, poor Bobby. Here was the true bearer of the cost of his mother's indiscretion. Before the exchange, Bobby, one can reasonably suppose, was deeply envious of the gift Bess was to receive. But Bobby could console himself that this valentine gift would lead to an immediate return, unlike, say, a birthday gift, whose return is miserably deferred. And what had Bobby's mother led him to believe he would be receiving? I would guess it was a little more exciting than Bess's scribblings and one chocolate-chip cookie.

After an exchange that causes embarrassment, the recipient tries desperately to reconstruct a plausible account for the breach and to interpret it away. Could the value of the gift be partially excused because Bobby was a year older than Bess, or because Bobby was a boy, or because his mother had a warm spot for Kathy or for Bess? Was it simply that Bobby's mother never stinted in buying Bobby anything and that the toy she bought Bess had a much lower value to her than it did to us? Or was our embarrassment caused by the fact that we thought she might be making a pitiable attempt to buy our friendship, in which case our very palpable embarrassment at our own failings would be compounded by our embarrassment for her as well? No such ex-

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[‡]Modes and Versions Courses are distributed across three interdisciplinary categories: ***The Natural World, Art and Expression,*** and ***Society and Culture***

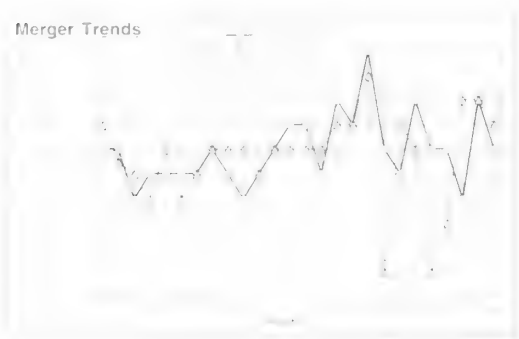
The Adelphi Core consequently represents, according to Adelphi President Peter Diamandopoulos, "Our faith in our students' abilities–beyond their interests, their backgrounds, their secondary education–to comprehend difficult ideas, to hazard testing their own ideas, and to translate learning and thought into choice and action in their own lives."

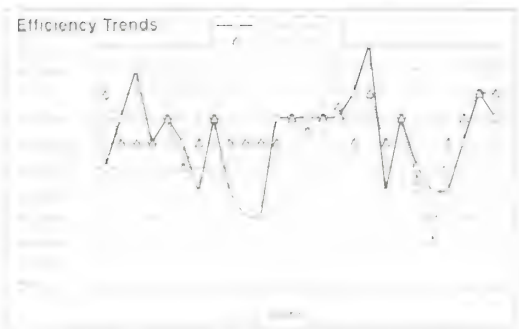
This is part of the University's answer to the anticipated question about the Adelphi Curriculum: does everybody need an education this good, this radical? We say no, everybody doesn't need an education this good, this radical–only your congressman, your doctor, your lawyer, your business partner, your accountant, your daughter, your son, yourself.

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embarrassed. And to find played by the rules! time game. This game, as we discovered, was manded that each gift be requited with an adequate return: that game we had lost.

LET ME COUNT THE WAYS





Scott compiled the charts using data from a six-month study by David Eckard. From September 1992 through Febru-

...tionship "efficiency," "feedback," "profitability," "loyalty

the quest

a partner wanted

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

From When in Doubt, Check Him Out: A Woman's Survival Guide for the 90's, *by private investigator Joseph J. Culligan, published by Hallmark Press in Miami. Culligan is a member of the National Association of Investigative Specialists' Hall of Fame.*

This book is a good place to start if you want to avoid involvement with the wrong "Mr. Right." The information that is provided in just one chapter might save you from physical or mental abuse at the hands of a potential mate with a history of violence and dishonesty. Imagine how much grief and heartache you could save yourself by simply making a call to find out if your boyfriend has been an inmate in the Federal Prison System, or by reviewing his divorce files to see if he battered his wife.

I will show you ways to find an individual's Social Security number and how to run a background check on that number to see what addresses he has called "home" and whether he has been named in a paternity suit. You will read about valuable court records, licenses, and reports that will enable you to know a little more about your "friend."

For example, your "friend's" driving record yields all kinds of important information. Does he have a valid license? Does he have an excessive number of traffic tickets? Has he ever been charged with having an "improper child restraint device"? (This may lead you to children and child-support payments your "friend" has not told you about.) Check the accident reports: Was he driving a vehicle he owned, or was it a vehicle that was owned by a wife, girlfriend, or business associate you know nothing about? Does the place of employment that your "friend" gave the police match what he told you? Did he give them the same date of birth that he gave you? This sort of deception may seem innocent—your "friend" may simply have wanted to shave a few years off his age—but it also may not be: he may have wanted to thwart any future background checks on himself.

When in Doubt, Check Him Out also shows you how to take advantage of less obvious sources of pertinent information about your subject—like state lottery commissions. Even though you have no reason to believe that your "friend" has ever won the lottery, you might want to check. Your "friend" may cry poverty while he sits on wealth he has never told you about.

Did your subject serve in Korea or Vietnam? You may want to check casualty files to see if he

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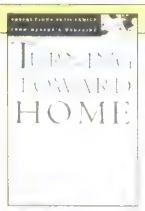
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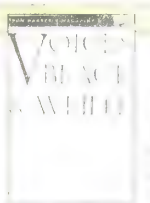
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took the identity of a soldier who was killed in [illegible]. I'm sure you are aware, it's not uncommon for someone to assume the identity of a dead person.

Another important but often overlooked source of information is your state's child-support office. You would be surprised how many times a man who seems to be A-OK in every way owes child support. If you marry your subject, there may be a knock at your door in the middle of the night, and your husband may be arrested on the spot for failing to make his payments. Remember, after you are married, you will be *liable for your husband's debts*. Back payments for child support can run into tens of thousands of dollars.

The point of *When in Doubt, Check Him Out* is very simple. Save yourself years of financial woes or physical or mental abuse by being aggressive and finding out *who he really is*.

[Lament]

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH HIM

From a full-page advertisement that appeared in the November 22, 1993, issue of Daily Variety. *The ad, a tribute to River Phoenix, the actor, was signed by* [illegible] *a pseudonym for Joel Hoffman, a little-known actor, who placed the ad at an estimated cost of $2,800. Phoenix died on October 31 of an overdose of cocaine and morphine.*

I returned to my van and read the story in the Calendar section of the *L.A. Times*: River Phoenix collapses, dies. I let myself cry. Oh, River, part of me surely dies with you. You were the first of my contemporaries younger than I whom I came to admire. I was both jealous of your career and so very proud of you. I feel like a tree ripped from Mother Earth. I wish I had someone to hold right now who understood my fraternity with you, someone through whose embrace I might root myself again. When I looked at you, it was as though I was looking at myself. Maybe it is for myself that I weep, like Margaret in Gerard Manley Hopkins's poem, whose breast shudders upon correlating autumn's falling leaves with her own inevitable demise. No doubt there will be talk of drugs and sordid clubs, but for all the I-told-you-so piety, your absence will be no more comprehensible to me. Who among us has not bent to that innate need to self-destruct? It is your breed of actor that keeps alive the mystique of craft. Only a few of us could have played My *Private Idaho*. We are the men whose identities are an amalgamation of others'; we are the men who know a thousand souls, perhaps at the expense of knowing our own. The Aquarian Age may crumble and blow down the streets like an empty Coke can, but your River is not quiet-ed: it swells in the heart and bleeds from the eyes. I dedicate my career to the memory of yours.

Good night, sweet prince of cinema.
Adieu, adieu, adieu.
You have shuttled off your mortal coil,
Which we shall care for now.
May better realms say it you.

[Essay]

THE FURY OF EROS

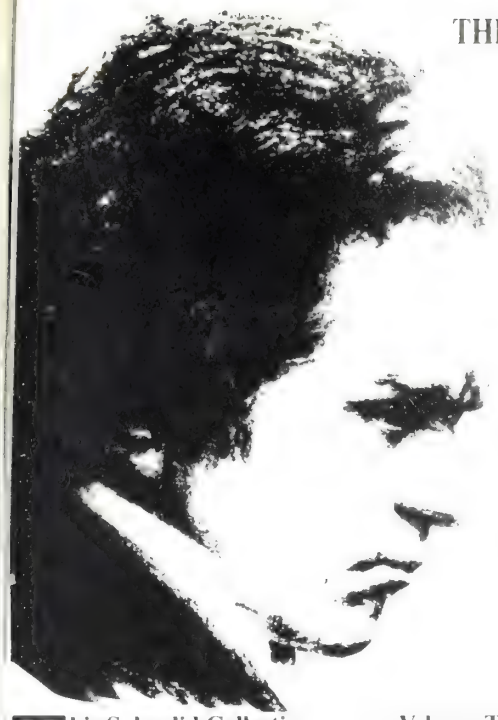
From a preface, by Peter Marin, to Eros, *a collection of poems by William Wallis, published by Stone and Scott, in Sherman Oaks, California. A collection of Marin's essays,* Freedom and Its Discontents, *will be published later this year by Steerforth Press, in South Royalton, Vermont.*

It's no accident that of all the ancient gods only Eros has preserved in the modern age the same powers and function he had in the past. Zeus is gone, and Hera, and so are Pan and Aphrodite and all of the other gods whose behavior long ago haunted human fate. But Eros remains a power beyond our social order and morality; he stalks, goads, ruins, and transforms us, and sometimes he lifts us as if on the palm of a huge hand into regions that astonish and terrify us and that we would never, otherwise, have entered.

I know: in our popular mythologies we have gelded Eros and tamed him, reducing him to a figure like the one we assign to the New Year, a roly-poly babe in a diaper smiling benignly from Valentine cards. But in truth, Eros' forms are many and sometimes terrible, and in full strength he comes to us winged and gleaming and muscled like an athlete, with a fury and will that overpower our own and drive us before him as would a storm.

Who does not know this firsthand? The powers of Eros, though perhaps coded in the genes, lie always beyond us, beyond the rules for behavior we carefully lay down or the recipes for relationship spelled out in popular magazines or in the fashionable books about women who love too much or men who love too often. All of that in relation to Eros is like pissing into the wind. For desire appears to us from the corners of the earth or the depths of self with a force and urgency and some-

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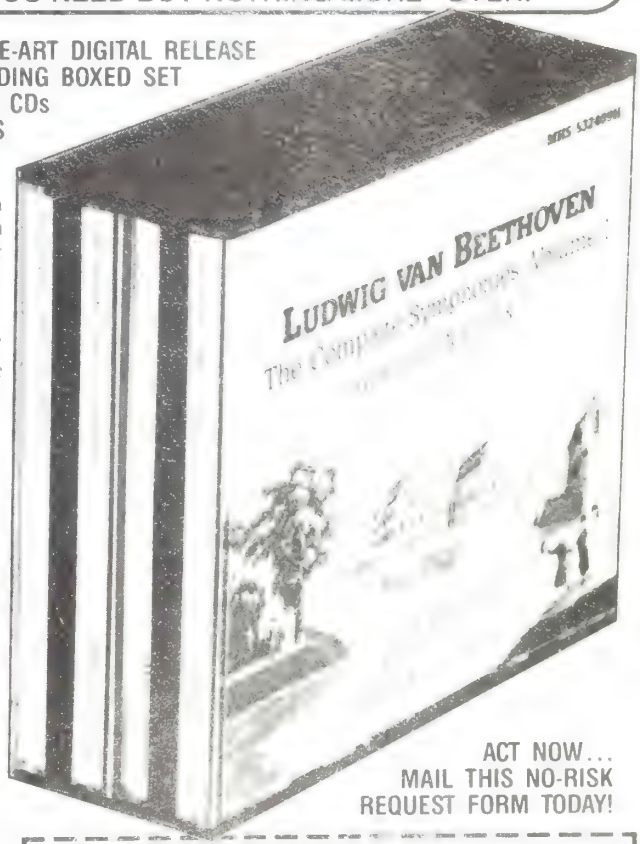
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help ascribing them to a god, for nothing else

with our own. Young, we are only doors, and wide open. Everything that rises early within us

ternal to us as the hurricanes and tornados that on occasion lift our houses, trees, and cars as

to Eros, pine when he's late in coming, dress or

Here I am.

Sometimes Eros stays near, accompanying us

than not he hovers for a while in domestic life and then, perhaps bored, draws back and goes elsewhere for challenge and sport. The dinner table, the marriage bed, the midnight cries of children—these real but burdensome joys are rarely to Eros' specialized taste. Married, we take the long view, bend in our lives to the demands of order, safety, family, the future—all necessary in their ways to happiness and satisfaction but having little to do with Eros.

And then? Well, look around you. Eros is not finished. Though banished or bored, he does not keep away. Somewhere in his retreat he whirls around and returns: marriages break open; the doors swing wide; again the winds rise and the windows rattle, the clothes lift from the line and the shingles fly from the roof; the houses we have built tremble on their foundations. We find we love the wrong people or too many people, we're tossed this way or that, blood running, hearts aching, souls aswoon, and, yes, all of the jealousies and fears of flesh set free again like furies.

Who has not known, as an adult, the pleasure and torment of illicit love, has not felt Eros tug at a heart already given or crown with glory the flesh of someone other than those familiar beside us at night? This is how, I believe, Eros blesses marriages: by driving each one through the portals of infidelity, upheaval, and perhaps at last forgiveness, testing the powers of love against those of desire and seeing which pairs of mates survive and which throw up their four hands and divide the property and go their separate ways, victims of Eros and his frightful initiations.

[Illustrated]

A MYTH ABOUT ME

School, in Marlboro, Massachusetts. Jordan, who is nine, was assigned the following task by her teacher: "A myth is an opinion, belief, or ideal that has no basis in fact. A naive theory is something you thought was true but, after further study, turned out to be untrue. Write and illustrate a myth about yourself."

M

my boyfriend. Our moms do things with us. We go to the frog pond and catch tadpoles. And we

ple think he is my boyfriend.

[Alumni Note]

MOST LIKELY TO ABSTAIN

From a letter sent last June by Raymond E. Lovett to the Class of 1953 reunion committee of Cathedral High School, in Burlington, Vermont. The committee asked alumni to provide memories of their time at CHS for publication in a reunion booklet. Lovett's submission was rejected as "unsuitable." During Lovett's time at CHS, he was elected prefect of the Sodality, a group devoted to spirituality and purity; he later joined the priesthood.

When I entered CHS I brought with me an imagination to be envied, full of rich, intoxicating fantasies that daily warred against the salvation of my soul. I was proud of the girls who came with me to CHS from our elementary school, Christ the King, and their personal offerings to my erotic imaginings: Barbara Bovate's blouse, Rita Gravel's sweaters, Phyllis Beauchmin's shortness, Joyce Cambell's rose lipstick, Carolyn Beaupre's fingers, Pat Gariepy's legs. My shame over the fetishistic and unstoppable lust these visions produced was matched by further





"Untitled, 1993," by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders (left), "Lolita, 1990," by William Wegman (center), and "Untitled," in Ho
s Erotic," a collection of photograph and essays in the N
shots from around the world to submit images that

lusting after some of their mothers. I heard Mrs Gravel's French accent whisper an invitation to the ninth hole, just beyond the bunker, and I could make Mrs Campbell's perfume come to my nose at will, bringing with it an image of her disrobing. Crazy for sex, I once borrowed the Kama Sutra from the Fletcher Free Library and wrapped it in a CHS book cover, complete with the photo of the cathedral on the front and the Virgin on the back. I studied all the positions, and in my fantasies I became a sought-after source of pleasure by every woman who entered my imagination. The little kindnesses to start—a seductive word, a quote, a poem—cigarette dangling from the right corner of the mouth, the passionate ohs, then an ah.

These fantasies were accompanied by a vicious habit, the guilt-producing, out-of-control, detestable sin of self-abuse, which elicited self-hatred and a fear of the fires of hell. Perversely, this guilt and fear had absolutely no effect on the number of times I indulged; they fueled an already wild imagination, creating a deeper anxiety that made my sweat glands emit an embarrassingly ample flow of sex/guilt fluid, with its unique, powerful odor of repressed lust. A curious equation followed: the more wild my imaginings, the more tightly tied my tongue. I never spoke to a girl that year.

While at CHS, my erotic pool expanded exponentially, to encompass the greater Burlington area, including the pleasures of the St. Anthony girls and their French sexuality: Carmen Fournier, Christine Demers, the sisters Marcessault from Winooski, Jacque Fortin, and the incomparable Germaine Viens. Germaine! And then, there was [illegible] mure persona, and flute-playing ability combined to create the effect [illegible] to play, and I [illegible] ing her performance of Sousa marches.

The trauma caused by my erotic feelings was somewhat [illegible] a man for what he is thinking," but then again was inflamed by that horrible teaching that every sin against impurity is a mortal sin, including impure thought [illegible] Activity or [illegible] When I [illegible] me away and asked, "Do you really like [illegible]

One [illegible] ly on your peers for sexual information. Kissy Ross, Larry [illegible] ers taught me stuff about sex I am just now getting over.

I [illegible] ter a drugstore with a swagger, approach a male [illegible] lar on the counter, and hold up three fingers. I [illegible] and the guy looked me in the eye and asked, "[illegible] with your swagger and the plunking of the coin."

[illegible]

down on the base path, drop balls in the end zone. If someone had a bad day on the court or [illegible] ing himself.

[illegible] it once in a while you might have a happy mar-

With all this information in my head, I grew more and more confused. To help myself, I behaved in a grandiose manner: I entered the seminary, vowed celibacy, and lived purely for sixteen years. Then I met a woman, who in one short ecstatic night showed me the light of sexual pleasure. I married her and have been trying to make up for those lost dry years ever since.

[Poem]

IN A LARGE FAMILY

"When One Has Lived a Long Time in a Large Family," by Doug Marx. Marx read this poem last February at a fund-raising event for Oregon Public Broadcasting, in Portland. Marx explains in a note that the poem is a response to Galway Kinnell's "When One Has Lived a Long Time Alone." He lives in Portland.

When one has lived a long time in a large family
one outwits the hermit saint, owning

nothing, not even the shirt on one's back,
which progeny male and female filch at will,

and lose or wear to rags, so that one learns
how to live by letting go, how to disappear

without leaving, zoning it all out, ducking
into the upstairs can, that ten-foot hut

with its white porcelain frog pond and
meditation ring, zero where one peephole giveth

and the other taketh away,
where one can squat as if seated

in a lifesaver in deep space,
mooning the universe, as if there were nothing

to do all day but drift around in oneself,
befriending bugs, reading poems

out of it, spinning an empty toilet-paper roll,

cursing the whole house, yelling for help,
when one has lived a long time in a large family.

[Story]

WHAT WE WANTED TO DO

From a story by Ron Carlson in the Fall 1993 issue of Witness, *published by Oakland Community College, in Farmington Hills, Michigan. Carlson's story "A Note on the Type" appeared in the October 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

What we wanted to do was spill boiling oil onto the heads of our enemies as they attempted to bang down the gates of our village, but, as everyone now knows, we had some problems, primarily technical problems, that prevented us from doing what we wanted to do the way we had hoped to do it. What we're asking for today is another chance.

From its inception I have been intimately involved in the boiling-oil project—research, development, physical deployment. I also happened to be team leader on the roof last month when we had occasion to try the system during the Visigoth attack, about which so much has been written.

First, the very concept of oil on the roof upset many of our villagers. Granted, it is exotic, but all great ideas seem strange at first. When our researchers realized we could position a cauldron two hundred feet directly above our main portals, they began to see the possibilities of the greatest strategic defense system in the history of mankind.

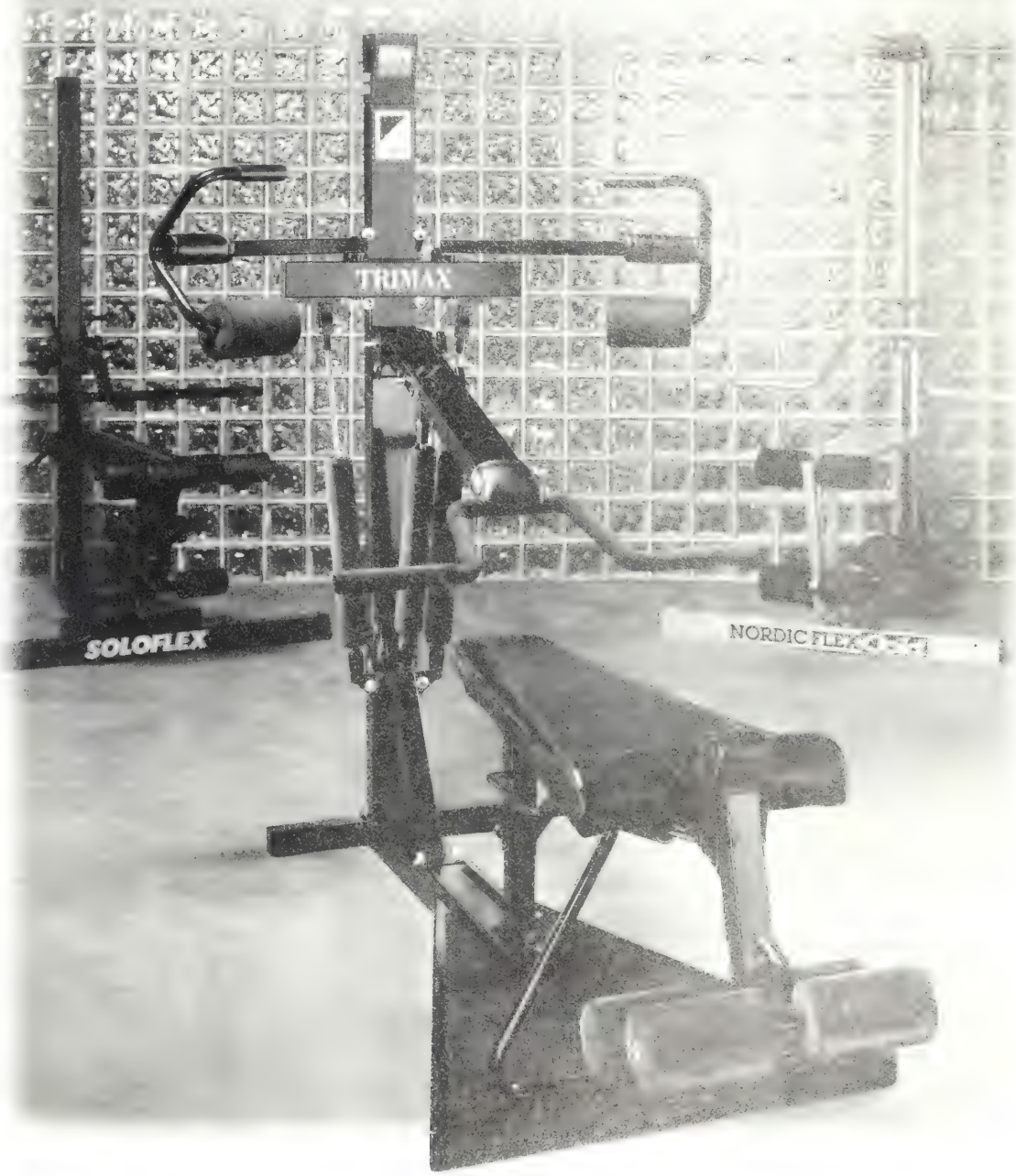
I want to emphasize that we were committed to this program—and we remain committed. But at every turn we've met problems that our researchers could not—despite their intelligence and intuition—have foreseen. For instance: how were we to get a 1,900-pound brass cauldron onto the roof? In the end, the cauldron was raised to the roof by means of a custom-designed net and petard under less than ideal conditions: the Retrogoths and the Niligoths plundered our village almost incessantly during the cauldron's four-month ascent.

The cauldron's arrival on the roof was quite a moment. I remember it well. We stood by that gleaming symbol of our impending safety, a bright brass (and a few lesser metals) beacon to the world that we were not going to take it anymore. The wind carried up to us the cries of villagers being carried away by either the Maxigoths or the Minigoths, it was hard to tell. But there we stood, and as I felt the wind in my hair and watched the sporadic procession of home furnishings being carried out of our violated gates, I knew we were perched on the edge of a new epoch.

Well, there was some excitement; we began at once. We started a fire under the cauldron and knew we would all soon be safe. At that point I made a mistake, which I now readily admit. In

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could see their cruel eyes and we could read their savage and misspelled tattoos that I realized our error. At that time I put my hand on the smooth side of our beautiful cauldron and found it only vaguely warm. Lukewarm. Tepid.

We had not known then what we now know: *we need to put the oil on sooner.*

It was my decision and my decision alone to do what we did, and that was to pour the warm oil on our enemies as they milled about the front gates, hammering at it with their truncheons.

Now, this is where my report diverges from so many of the popular accounts. We have heard it said that the warm oil served as a stimulant to the attack that followed, the attack I alluded to earlier in which the criminal activity seemed even more animated than usual in the minds of some of our townspeople. Let me say first: I was an eyewitness. I gave the order to pour the oil and I witnessed its descent. I am happy and proud to report that the oil hit its target with an accuracy and completeness I could have only dreamed of. We got them all. There was oil everywhere. We soaked them, we coated them, we covered them in a lustrous layer of oil. Unfortunately, as everyone knows, it was only warm. Their immediate reaction was also what I had hoped for: surprise and panic. This, however, lasted about one second. Then several of them looked up into my face and began waving their fists in what I could only take as a tribute. And then, yes, they did become quite agitated anew, recommencing their assault on the weary planks of our patchwork gates.

As to the attack that followed: it was no different in magnitude or intensity than any of the dozens we suffer every year. It may have seemed more odd or extreme, since the perpetrators were greasy and thereby more offensive, and they did take every stick of furniture left in the village, including the pews from the church, every chair in the great hall, and four milking stools, the last four, from the dairy.

But I, for one, am simply tired of hearing about the slippery stain on the village steps. Yes, there is a bit of a mess, and yes, some of it seems to be permanent. My team removed what they could with salt and talc all this week. All I'll say now is watch your step as you come and go; in my mind it's a small inconvenience to pay for a perfect weapons system.

So we've had our trial run. We gathered a lot of data. And you all know we'll be ready next time. We are going to get to do what we wanted to do. We will vex and repel our enemies with boiling oil. In the meantime, who needs furniture! We have a project! We need the determination not to lose the dream and we need a lot of firewood. They will come again. You know it and I know it, and let's simply commit ourselves to making sure that the oil, when it falls, is very hot. ■

A FOUNTAIN PEN, AN EMPTY PAGE, AND THOU

February brings with it the romantic chance of Valentine's Day, but who remembers how to write a love letter? The form was never an easy one, not even for poets, and stationery stores bloom with the flowers of printed sentiment that require of the ardent suitor (or the mysterious lady, or the secret admirer, or the long-lost friend) nothing other than a signature and a stamp.

Why write a letter when the words might one day show up in court? Why not send chocolate or speak, briefly and preferably through a handkerchief, from a public telephone?

Because words on paper uncover the disguises of the heart, and because the important news is between the lines.

With the thought of taking the occasion of Valentine's Day out of the hands of the drudging clerks seated at the assembly lines of Hallmark Cards, *Harper's Magazine* invited four authors skilled in rhetoric and sleek with guile (a cartoonist, a playwright, and two novelists) to teach a lesson in epistolary romance.

The following forum is based on a discussion held at the Pierre Hotel in New York City. Jack Hitt served as moderator.

JACK HITT
is a contributing editor of *Harper's Magazine*.

LYNDA BARRY
is a cartoonist and a playwright. Her comic strip, "Ernie Pook's Comeek," appears in sixty newspapers. Her most recent play is *The Good Times Are Killing Me*.

JULIE GARWOOD
is the author of many romance novels, among them *Saving Grace*, which was on the *New York Times* best-seller list. Her new novel, *Prince Charming*, will be published in May by Pocket Books.

A. R. GURNEY
has written many plays, among them *Love Letters* and *The Cocktail Hour*. He is also the author of three novels and the recipient of the Drama Desk Award.

MARK LEYNER
is the author of several books, among them *Et Tu, Babe*, a novel, and *My Cousin, My Gastroenterologist*, a collection of stories.

JACK HITT: Allow me to introduce myself. My name, for the purposes of this discussion, is Chris. I am twenty-four years old, and subject to the prejudices and inhibitions of my generation. I work in the financial-services department of a Wall Street firm. I majored in economics with a minor in communications at the University of Pennsylvania. Recently I met a woman named Roxanne and have seen her a couple of times since, at parties. I've fallen for her. And, I think, she for me. She studied Byronic literature and now works at Sotheby's, in the eighteenth-century furniture department. She's about five years older than I am, raven-haired, a very intimidating and interesting woman. I want to write her and tell her how I feel. And that's why I have called you all here. As a cold-blooded careerist, I don't really know what to do. But as a red-blooded American, I knew I needed some consultants before I proceed. You all will serve as my Cyranos de Bergerac.

MARK LEYNER: I want to help you, Chris. But love letters seem antique and silly. They require a distance that can't be bridged. People wrote love letters because they couldn't speak to the person. That's no [illegible]. A love letter creates its own distance. Better, it creates desire. And a love letter can express the inexpressible. I remember in junior high I'd have this song that reminded me of this guy. I'd listen to it real carefully on the radio. And I'd write down all the words and then look at the words. And they looked really stupid. There's something about music that makes the [illegible]. A love letter like that. The emotion of love supplies the music so that the words don't make you throw up while you read it.

LEYNER: Sure, a letter can create desire. But I used to work in advertising and now am a novelist, so I understand just how malleable and indeterminate, even irresponsible, language can be. Language as a means to convey love seems less and less honest a medium.

BARRY: What would you propose? A modern love dance?

A. R. GURNEY: Maybe Mark's right. My play *Love Letters* is an indictment of a culture that forced people apart and pushed them into the letter-writing mode. I grew up in that culture. It separated the sexes. It sent kids to boarding schools and then to single-sex colleges. Men went to war and women stayed home, so we were forced to write and allow the imagination to play. Then again, everywhere I look I see people struggling to *re-create* that distance. One example of that, a very vulgar example, is phone sex. Not since Tristan and Isolde put a sword between them in bed has there been such an artificial distance.

BARRY: But letters have a lot of practical advantages. They're great for apologies, because you can go on and on about how sorry you are. You can exalt the other person. So let's get on with it. My main advice to you, Chris, is that any love letter, especially a first one, must have the word "you" in it. A *lot*.

JULIE GARWOOD: Exactly. And there's no sentence with the word "I" in it that doesn't have a "you" or two. Chris, I defend love letters; words put down on paper can't be taken back, and, what's more, they can be seen by many other people besides good old Roxanne.

[illegible] like her lawyer.

GURNEY: Chris, a practical note: a love letter should be written with pen on paper, and not only for nostalgic reasons. There is a gesture of commit-

ment in the very process of writing something down with your own hand. It suggests a thoughtfulness that other media can't capture. A letter composed on a computer doesn't count, because you can revise and hone it before sending it.

HITT: Why the insistence on the look of a first draft?

GURNEY: I suspect it goes back to our ancestors, for whom ink and pens and paper were quite expensive. Writing signified a personal commitment. Yes, you could cross out an occasional word, but paper was valuable. So you'd fill up a page and then write up and down in the margins.

HITT: Roxanne's gonna think I'm Joel Rifkin.

BARRY: No, just a Virgo.

GARWOOD: You can't be too particular in this regard, Chris. Flaubert once wrote Louise Colet, "I am not writing to you on my ordinary writing paper—that is edged with black, and I want nothing sad to pass from me to you."

HITT: So a Mont Blanc pen, cotton bond, and a lot of the word "you." I'm getting the idea.

DEAREST ROXANNE

LEYNER: You've convinced me that, as a tactic, sending a love letter might not be a bad idea. And actually, if you want a trope for today's love letter, I suggest advertising, my former calling. What is a love letter but a form of direct-mail marketing?

GARWOOD: Oh, my.

LEYNER: If we were your agency, and you came to us as a client, we'd need to know your target audience, the competition, the niche you're aiming for, how you'd like to position your product, that sort of thing. Isn't this warm and romantic?

HITT: I'm an American. You're speaking my language.

BARRY: I have another way of thinking about it. A love letter is a form of currency. I think of it like a dollar. See, in a relationship, especially at the beginning, people are always trying to calculate who's getting the better deal. So if you write a love letter, you're showing her your currency and allowing her to assign value to it. Are those Swiss francs in your pocket or just pesos? That's the question. And you won't know until she writes back.

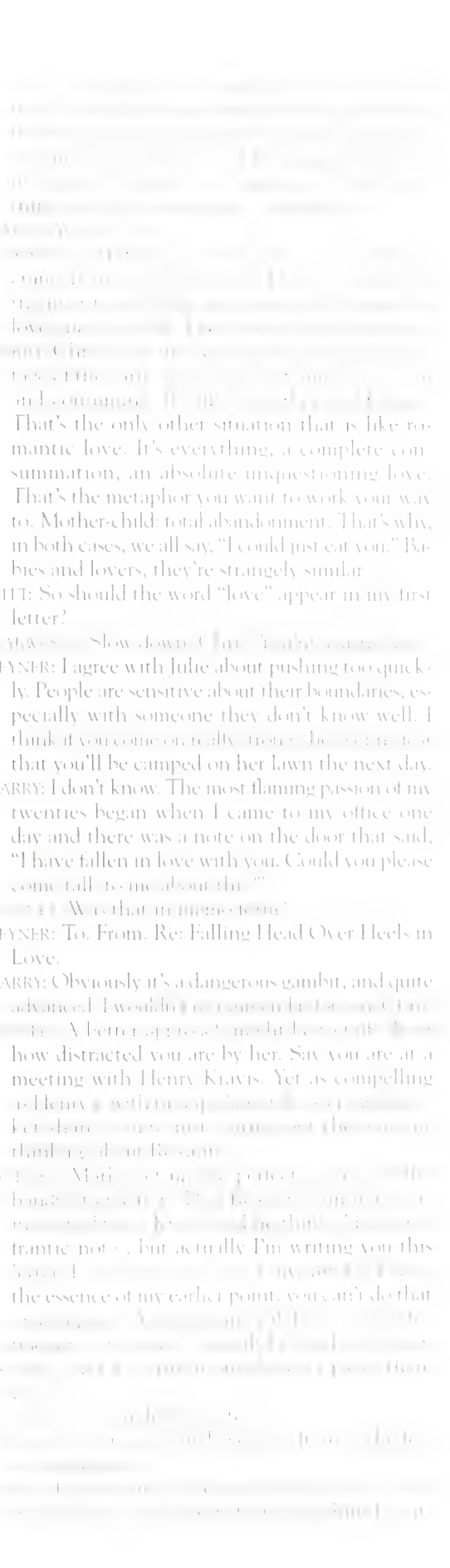
LEYNER: It's really an act of courage. Because you don't quite know what she thinks. You're sailing into terra incognita.

GARWOOD: That's right. You're on Wall Street. She's been reading Byron. But you're writing the letter. You're proving you want to please her just by picking up your pen.

GURNEY: But I agree with Lynda's point. You've chosen a currency that you think Roxanne will appreciate and be at home in. That in itself is a gesture, a noble gesture.

HITT: So how far should I go in the first letter? Should I reveal all that's on my mind?

GARWOOD: Tread softly at first, Chris. If I were writ



That's the only other situation that is like romantic love. It's everything, a complete consummation, an absolute unquestioning love. That's the metaphor you want to work your way to. Mother-child: total abandonment. That's why, in both cases, we all say, "I could just eat you." Babies and lovers, they're strangely similar.

HITT: So should the word "love" appear in my first letter?

LEYNER: I agree with Julie about pushing too quickly. People are sensitive about their boundaries, especially with someone they don't know well. I think if you come on really strong [illegible] that you'll be camped on her lawn the next day.

BARRY: I don't know. The most flaming passion of my twenties began when I came to my office one day and there was a note on the door that said, "I have fallen in love with you. Could you please come talk to me about this?"

[illegible] Was that in regard to me?

LEYNER: To. From. Re: Falling Head Over Heels in Love.

BARRY: Obviously it's a dangerous gambit, and quite advanced. I would [illegible] A better approach might be [illegible] how distracted you are by her. Say you are at a meeting with Henry Kravis. Yet as compelling as Henry [illegible] her [illegible] thinking about Roxanne.

[illegible] Maybe you [illegible] bond [illegible] by the [illegible] frantic note, but actually I'm writing you this [illegible] the essence of my earlier point, you can't do that [illegible]

HOW TO CORRESPOND WITH A BOY

By an anonymous teenager, excerpted from the January [illegible] Seventeen magazine

[illegible] by female letter writers is infinitely superior to that of males, and for a good reason. Girls learn their art through need, the necessity for overcoming boys' natural dislike of writing letters. Turning a male into a faithful correspondent takes magic—or its equivalent: the ability to be both provocative and demure.

The beginning of your letter—the salutation—is crucial. Although the traditional "Dear George" can't be faulted, I personally applaud the girl who tries a different approach, such as a breezy, one-word "Hi!" or the boy's name, followed by an inviting dash. If you're fortunate enough to have a nickname for your quarry, by all means make use of it.

The boy's own letter is one guide to the tone you should adopt. If you think you detect admiration or some other such worthy sentiment between the shy lines in his letter, give your letter an air of appreciation and acceptance. On the other hand, if his letter is casual, insouciant, you'll want to sound carefree, too. Even with this boy, you can let tenderness crop up at an unexpected place to assure him of your vulnerability.

An example of a *bad* beginning for a letter is: "I've just finished studying and decided it was time to write." That doesn't make the boy feel nearly important enough. Instead, you might begin: "I've got to leave for the movies soon, but it's such a lovely starry night and it reminds me so much of when we met that I had to write you."

What's great about the sentence above is the juxtaposition of romance and reality. Being a male, the recipient will probably notice the romance first. Only at the second reading will he spot the carefully planted clause about the movies and begin to wonder exactly *who* was taking you.

Telling about a dream you had is an excellent device, allowing you to be both cryptic and tantalizing. Dreams can be left unfinished, and thus open to delicious questioning. Impossible things can happen in dreams, and the mention of them can stir the male [illegible] comments that can be interpreted in two ways are also available. A vague mention of the boy you dated last weekend, and how different he is from the boy you are writing, will set your correspondent to wondering. Different? In what [illegible]

Of course, while using strategy you should never lose sight of the boy who's your target. Be sure to answer all his questions, to comment intelligently on his football exploits and his term paper.

own gravitational force. Beyond his control. It's something he's being pulled into. The tone of the letter should not be "I am chasing you" but "This is happening to me. Is it happening to you as well?"

LEYNER: What about the delivery system?

GURNEY: Can't beat the post office.

LEYNER: Well, but there are wonderful ways of delivering something. Just leave it in the door. Then there's this ghostly presence of you having actually been there and left.

BARRY: That can cut both ways. We're getting scary again.

HITT: What if she calls me and says, "What is this?"

GURNEY: That probably won't happen. A letter sent by post—almost by nature, I think—requires a written response, not a phone call. But is there something you can build into it? Maybe "I wish you'd write me and tell me how you feel."

LEYNER: Or "Enclosed is a self-addressed stamped envelope."

BARRY: My boyfriend and I used to write notes to each other before we graduated to full-blown love letters. He just wrote a note one day and I wrote back. We didn't necessarily use the *L* word. But I could tell that there was flirtation going on, partly by the handwriting.

HITT: How do I tell if Roxanne is flirting with me by her penmanship?

BARRY: Well, it's very subtle, and it may not be something you can teach. I don't know why, but a letter that leaves ample room on the page is somehow flirtatious. It reminds me of kids playing, like he's got a sandbox big enough for two. Ample room also means that the person's not needy. They have enough. It's currency again. You want to know that you're not about to date the whale that swallowed Jonah.

SOMETHING TO DECLARE

HITT: Okay. Thanks to you all, Roxanne and I have dated and written successfully. We've found that we both like *Seinfeld* and *The Simpsons*. We both like Rob Reiner comedies and Martin Scorsese dramas. We have many common interests, and I've reached that intoxicating moment when I want to tell her that I love her. Should I tell her this personally? Or should I set down my declaration?

GARWOOD: Paper.

LEYNER: Paper.

HITT: I see everyone is for paper. Why such a prejudice against the spoken word?

LEYNER: Well, the first person I loved, in high school, had me over to dinner. We were at the big table. It had been cleared, and her parents had left the room. We were just sitting together, and I was just sort of doodling on the pad they kept for phone messages. Then I wrote, "I love you." I guess I couldn't tell her. But there was something re-

marvelous about writing [illegible] watching her watch me write them.

[illegible]: Whoa!

GARWOOD: This from a man who has never written a love letter!

[illegible]: It's all coming back to me now.

[illegible]: There's a famous moment in *Anna Karenina* when Levin is with Kitty. They're sitting somewhere, and he's writing words. And they're both looking at it as he writes. What he's writing is a proposal of marriage. That's why written declaration is preferable to speaking. It turns it into a physical object.

BARRY: It's the thrill of watching something come true. When you get a letter, there's the high of thinking, "Here's proof." Because you feel that something on paper is The Truth. It's the real picture. It's the soul speaking. Or it seems so, but it's not necessarily so. Well, actually, now that I think about it, it isn't so at all. I once had a correspondence with a guy who wrote incredible letters—but managed to leave out that he was a Republican, an attorney, and completely terrifying in a whole bunch of ways.

LOVE'S FINE MADNESS

HITT: I am wondering what kind of writing is appropriate to our time. For instance, I thought of working up the I-am-not-worthy theme, but my co-dependency group didn't approve of bashing my self-esteem. I thought of the you-are-everything-I-worship-every-inch-of-you theme, but my attorney warned me of certain stalking and sexual-harassment statutes. I thought of describing parts of her body, but I don't want her to think I objectify her. What ideas, themes, or tropes would you suggest?

GARWOOD: Explain your awareness of changes around you. This is a grand theme in love letters. When you're in love, everything becomes different. Things change. Something that is funny is suddenly hilariously funny. Even your appetite is different. Chronicle every little change. It's honest, and she'll love you for it.

HITT: Aren't I leaving the paper trail of an obsessive-compulsive?

BARRY: No, no. A letter from a stalker reads very differently than one from a finely obsessed lover. You know how when you're writing, you're aware in an innate way of these little boundaries? You tease the reader by pushing forward a little, gently. Like we've been saying. But the stalker has no sense of that subtlety. He lets you know immediately everything he wants to do to you, and how long it will last. Much of what he writes makes no sense. When you read it, you feel sick. When you read a letter from someone you don't love back, you feel sad. But when you read a letter from someone you love, you feel—

HOW TO WRITE AN EROTIC LOVE LETTER

By V. K. McCarty

[illegible] as easy as falling in love. All it takes is an [illegible]

Perfumed stationery and exquisite penmanship are useful, but not as necessary as your own true voice. In helping [illegible] selves sexually, I've certainly enjoyed the wicked deceptions [illegible] when I read submissions filled with mammoth, swelling mammaries and the wielding of foot-long organs, I know I'm being treated to the kind of fakery guaranteed to elude arousal. Using the real voice of your heart is the most important lesson.

Now, consider your unique gifts. Remember, you have much to offer; after all, you are an erotic expert in many ways you may not have realized. Start with the image of the beloved. Your desired lover, whether lady or gent, would probably profit immensely by reading about where your attraction lies. What unnoticed gesture or fragrance or curve drives your lust to the boiling point? Who knows? Seeing him- or herself through your eyes may be so compellingly pleasurable that the person simply cannot do without you.

As you write, cut to the chase, broach the erotic. Share secrets so astonishingly intimate it might take years of consummated bliss to reveal them in the flesh. Describe, for example, what you really want an eager tongue and mouth to do to please you. Generously elaborate on the ultimate oral sex scene, perhaps.

Be excruciatingly exact. Love soft, wet circles? Sloppy pistoning with a little hand help? Tiny, light licks with extra pressure on the crest of the stroke? And writing is very good practice for the real thing. Articulating our desires to partners is the best preventive against resentment building up later on.

Consider describing what you dream of this wonderful man doing to you between the satin sheets. Narrate your most potent fantasy, or the cherished boudoir technique that you share with Madonna, in wildly thrilling detail. Let your lover eavesdrop on several of the lusty scenarios that send you gasping over the edge.

Or really be daring. In your letter, begin to reveal precisely what you do to send *yourself* gasping over the edge.

[illegible] Spin the tale of a ravishment much more intense—or more tender—than you would ever presume to attempt in these politically correct times.

[illegible]

GARWOOD: Euphoric.

BARRY: Yeah. It's a body sensation. Here's an idea, Chris. One of your themes has to be relief. Writing the letter is a relief, because so much of your [illegible]

LEYNER: Another rich vein to mine is your shared history. [illegible] this and other things that happens when you begin to create a common [illegible] Each detail is fascinating. You could just go to a mall and hang near the fountain in the atrium, and you'll find yourself going over that time as if it were the Zapruder film.

BARRY: Exactly. Frame by frame, so that the events leading up to, say, the "I love you" moment all make sense and seem predestined.

LEYNER: It's amazing how love can make conversation, or letters, about the smallest things into a pleasure.

GURNEY: So after the first couple of letters—because that's where we are now—you'll find that you can describe *anything* in detail. It doesn't matter if she was there. You can tell her you've gone to the ball game the night before. And even though she might skip that part on the first read—

GARWOOD: And she will, looking for the word "you."

GURNEY: The details are full of significance and interest because you wrote it.

BARRY: "I thought of *you* as I drove out of the parking lot." "As I waited in line for a quart of beer, *you* were on my mind."

GURNEY: It's like a cat dragging a dead mole into the house for the owner. It's a presentation, a gift to her, no matter how irrelevant or even grotesque. She'll appreciate it.

BARRY: It's a wild feeling knowing that somebody holds a fascinated gaze upon you. It's crazy. You can explain in great detail how you found a pinch of lint in your pocket, and they'll dreamily beg you, "Tell it again. Tell it again."

LEYNER: It's not just that you get to tell them things that would bore other people; there is something wonderful in the very banality of what you are describing.

GURNEY: It's precisely the fact that no one else *would* be interested that makes this kind of letter so interesting to her. Only "we" know these things. Only "we" care.

GARWOOD: During the first couple of summers of our courtship, my husband was in medical school. He wrote me all the time. And I, like Lynda, was always looking for the "you." He would describe me sweetly, but in medical-textbook terms. I remember looking up "hypothalamus" and thinking how sexy it sounded.

BARRY: "My darling. My glands opened and closed, opened and closed."

HITT: Speaking of glands, since I live in the age of Madonna, when the old bump and grind is in my face all the time, should I try to avoid that kind of writing in my letters or just acquiesce?

BARRY: Don't avoid it.

GURNEY: You can't help but put it in. You might not put it in the way Henry Miller does. But I think it would happen naturally.

GARWOOD: I'll tell you what works: just casually mention something she wore and how you can't stop thinking about it. Don't go into detail. Leave it to her imagination what you're thinking.

BARRY: "Those underpants . . ."

LEYNER: "I have them on as I write . . ." You know who wrote incredibly hot letters? Gary Gilmore.

GURNEY: I wouldn't recommend quoting *The Executioner's Song*.

LEYNER: Point taken. But it is tough deciding how erotic to be. It's really easy to be too abrupt; yet being too delicate and ethereal can make you come off—

BARRY: As a "drag." That's the scientific term. Chris,

CYBERCAD

Like everything else, epistolary romance has gone electronic. But love ignited on E-mail can create a number of unusual difficulties, as two California women, both members of the WELL, a computer conferencing system based in Sausalito, found last June. Comparing notes on their love life, they discovered they were carrying on intimate computer correspondences—moving on to phone conversations and, in one case, a visit—with the same man. Abetted by an on-line support group, the women decided to open the matter for discussion on the WELL. News Topic 1290, "Do You Know This Cyber-Scam-Artist?," drew nearly 1,000 responses over a period of ten days, most expressing outrage at what appeared to be a computer-aided breach of trust. At least two more of Mr. "X" 's E-mail conquests also came forward during the discussion. The following are excerpts from Mr. "X" 's exculpatory response on the WELL.

I CONDUCTED A "cyber relationship" . . . with more than one woman at a time. I was experimenting in a very new medium for me. I didn't think that the same concerns about fidelity I apply reflexively in physical relationships applied here in cyberspace. I was wrong. I said some things that I should *not* have said. At some point, these electronic flirtations became more intimate, and I should have and could have dealt with this issue. . . .

Debates about what constitutes an E-lynching and how many lynch mobs can dance on the head of a pin are all well and good, but I want you all to know that I *feel* like the victim of a lynch mob. What others say I did and said has been brutally re-interpreted by an electronic pack, virtual torches in hand. The topic in which all this was discussed had the word "scam" in the title. . . . And it is quite clear to me that I am a lightning rod for some generalized female anger about men. . . .

if you're at the point where you're writing hot letters, then we need to discuss context, the mechanics. At this stage, nicknames, pet names, salutations, and good-byes are critically important.

GURNEY: Good-byes were crucial when I was growing up. In a letter-writing culture, that was where you hid complex signals and codes. If you wrote "love," just "love," that wasn't so good. "Lots of love" was better. The door was opening. But it still wasn't great. Can you hear it? "Lots of love." If you got "all my love," there's a commitment in those words. But if a woman writes, "I love you," comma, the end—that is the ultimate statement. You're there.

HITT: Subject-verb-object, that's commitment.

BARRY: Man, that is so true. Don't you also find that after you've written a few letters, it's impossible to use the person's first name?

GURNEY: Precisely. You have to make one up.

BARRY: I remember that there was a point when it felt weird to write, "Dear Kevin." So I had to find some new way to put it.

LEYNER: Yeah, because his name is what *other* people call him.

BARRY: So you need your own.

LEYNER: Whatever it may be.

BARRY: A name you may never speak, even to him.

GARWOOD: Especially if it's secret.

BARRY: That's why those personal ads on Valentine's Day are like "Dear Huggy" or "Snuggles had his wompers from Wuzzy."

HITT: Why is it that so much of romance is creating this private infantile place? Is it just that we need somewhere to shed the complex apparatus of adulthood and act goofy?

BARRY: I think it goes back to the mother-baby relationship. When you say, "I wuv you, snookums" and "I wuv you too, snookums," one of you is the baby and the other's the mom.

LEYNER: Why can't you both be babies?

BARRY: Mother-baby love is unconditional love. There cannot even be a *thought* of separation. That's why the early stages of romantic love are like it. See, babies can't get much further than "I wuv you." Besides, one of you has to drive to get the wine.

LEYNER: What about putting items in the letter?

BARRY: I remember one guy sent me the little paper sleeve from his chopsticks at a Chinese restaurant. It was this physical thing. And it worked.

GURNEY: Corroborating evidence.

LEYNER: It says, "I've actually been where I've said; I am telling the truth."

BARRY: But also, "I've touched this, and now we're touching this."

LEYNER: See, we're getting into the felt multimedia presentation. Bits of souvenirs, parts of the environment, a leaf from a park.

BARRY: Like a photograph.

LEYNER: Start with an X ray.

HITT: I had a brain scan not long ago. Send that?

[illegible]

[illegible] your early letters to find out if you burned everything down. This is another phase of the [illegible]

DEAR JOHN

HITT: As it turns out, Lynda, Chris has stoked up another affair. [illegible] paramour and I are writing wild letters and having a helluva time. So Roxanne calls y'all up for some advice. She wants to write a Dear John letter. Since you know Chris so well, she's asked you to help her.

GURNEY: Wait. Why don't we stick with our hero and get him out from under this?

[illegible] He's too much of a [illegible]

GURNEY: But we're with him. We [illegible] him.

BARRY: Right! A revolt against the hypothetical. We won't have it. We're writing for Chris.

GARWOOD: It's the harder letter to write.

BARRY: Because he's completely inflamed with this other woman, he can't take his letter to Roxanne anywhere.

LEYNER: We're trying to write the letter that ends all letters.

HITT: Exactly. The question is, should it be bitter, kind, vengeful, sad, regretful? I think of Agnes von Kurowsky, who dumped Ernest Hemingway. She started her letter, "Dearest dear boy," [illegible] previously went into the [illegible] "Ernie" was Hemingway's least favorite nickname. And "dear boy" must've hurt.

GARWOOD: Chris, do you want to hurt her? You have nothing to be bitter about.

LEYNER: Yeah. You're [illegible] pal, if not lower. One thing you should know about a Dear John/Dear Jane letter. No matter what you say or [illegible] and there are many—she's going to hate you. And all her friends who read it will hate you. I [illegible]

GARWOOD: [illegible]

BARRY: See, she'll be able to show this letter to any [illegible] she'll say, "[illegible] have [illegible] ing there's no graceful exit, go ahead and show your baboon's ass. Give her something to work [illegible]

GURNEY: So what we need is a theme.

[illegible] can't handle [illegible] intimacy."

HELT: Possibly the most depressing sentence in any [illegible]

[illegible] approach: "We'd all

"I'm no good for you" is popular. "Ever since you met me, I've seen your relationship with your [illegible] It had to end."

[illegible] "It's [illegible] to be with you."

. Whatever you do, don't mention the new woman. There's nothing worse than "I know if you met her, you both would be friends."

LEYNER: In fact, you are!

BARRY: Actually, you're sisters!

GARWOOD: Or another bad approach: "She reminds [illegible] you."

LEYNER: Since you are a dirtbag, maybe you want to maintain Roxanne as a possibility for a while. Why end it?

GURNEY: Ending a relationship by letter is cowardly in the same way. But the advantage is that you can carefully measure your words, which you cannot do on the telephone.

LEYNER: You know the way movies depict people reading letters? The recipient reads the letter and simultaneously hears the writer's voice.

HELT: So I send her a cassette?

LEYNER: Yes. This is the full multimedia dirtbag presentation. You have your dirtbag voice as well as your dirtbag words for her to hate.

GARWOOD: I love this idea.

LEYNER: We have to think about what Lynda said. Roxanne's not going to feel any better after getting this letter. Only time, therapy, and probably another man will solve that.

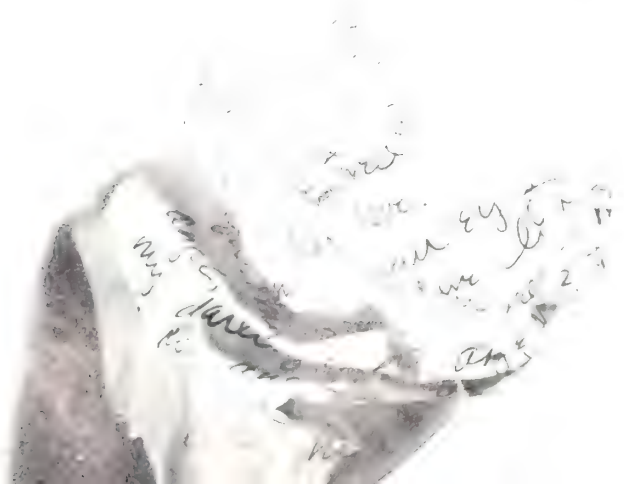
GURNEY: You'll make yourself feel better, and Roxanne knows this and hates you more for it.

BARRY: All last letters have to answer a question: Is it her or is it not her? And it has to be, It's not her. But of course it *is* her. Every last letter is a horrible, horrible lie. Try to be honorable, Chris. Don't say, "I still love you but not in that way."

"Honorably"

BARRY: Yeah, not the way that makes me want to see you, *talk* to you, *sleep* with you, *kiss* you, have any-

[illegible]



to *do* with you. You know, the other way. The way I love my president. Or my dentist.

LEYNER: So he should just be honest, manly, and honorable and say, "I've fallen in love with someone else."

BARRY: Wow. Just hearing you say that—I'm having trouble breathing.

LEYNER: This is only a test, Lynda.

BARRY: This is only a test. Were this a real breakup, you'd be curled up like a fetus on the floor, throwing up.

GARWOOD: A nice way to end it would be to return her letters.

LEYNER: Why do people want them back?

BARRY: People feel duped and want the evidence back. Besides, by keeping the letters he leaves open a slim hope; it will be grasped desperately.

GURNEY: Because writing is such a part of oneself. Roxanne is saying, "If you're going to reject me, you can't have that appendage of me."

GARWOOD: Edith Wharton wrote a number of letters to her love, Morton Fullerton. In the end, all she wanted was to get them back. He was the cruelest. He just ignored her.

GURNEY: And years later sold the letters.

GARWOOD: Chris, I think you want to be honest. It was in your character in the beginning. Just say, "I didn't go looking for this" or "These things happen."

BARRY: I had this friend once whose best friend stole his girlfriend. And they both came to him and they said, "It just sorta happened." It was during hippie times, when people were into things that "just sorta happened." He told me that he was almost convinced, and then he thought, What if they were talking about my wallet?

GURNEY: Mistakes were made!

BARRY: Exactly. And yet, for a person who's in love, it's still an acceptable excuse. We all just go, "Oh, yeah. Sure."

LEYNER: You know, it's interesting that what we're advising you to say now is precisely what we were advising you to say at the beginning. Here's all that language again. "Great forces beyond my control." It's a complete disavowal of responsibility. Yet how unsavory it all sounds now. "It just sort of happened."

BARRY: Oh, man. This is so perversely true.

GURNEY: It sounds so sleazy to the person receiving it, because she's out of the loop now. And he's saying, "I can't help myself."

BARRY: Exactly! "I don't know why this is happening to me."

GURNEY: It's the nature of love. Your volition is irrelevant.

LEYNER: It's a bit creepy, though, isn't it? The same slogans that got you into love are the best ones for getting you out of it.

GARWOOD: Full circle. A strange circle.

[illegible] Oh, man. ■

MAKING A KILLING

The high cost of peace in Northern Ireland

By Scott Anderson

On the night of August 8 this past summer, the Irish Republican Army threw a party in west Belfast. It was to honor the hundreds of men who had been snared in the British Internment dragnet of 1971, classified as terrorists, and locked away in the "cages" of Long Kesh prison outside Belfast for the next several years. Dress, I was told, would be casual.

The Cages Reunion was convened at an old factory building just off the "Murder Mile" section of the Falls Road and flush against the "peace line," a twenty-foot-high, solid-steel fence that separates the Catholic Falls neighborhood from the Protestant Shankill—ground zero of "The Troubles" in the British province of Northern Ireland, a conflict that has taken the lives of some 3,100 people since 1969.

Passing under the watchful eye of a half-dozen security men at the front gate, I crossed the floodlit courtyard and climbed to the reception hall on the second floor. It was a tough-looking crowd. Gathered around long tables were two to three hundred people—mostly men in their late thirties or early forties, with short hair, broad chests, and tattoos on their forearms, working their way through tin pints of Harp lager and mason jars of moonshine. I figured there was a total of about 800 years of jail experience in the room.

The reunion was a celebration both personal and political. Circulating among the tables were several men who had just come out of prison after fifteen or twenty years; they greeted their old comrades-in-arms with bear hugs and shouts of joy, and playfully patted stomachs gone soft or hair gone gray. The gathering was also a reminder that on this night, the twenty-second anniversary of the Internment dragnet that was meant to decapitate the IRA, they were still there, as strong and defiant as ever. Just that afternoon, in fact, several thousand Republican sympathizers had converged on City Hall, the symbolic cradle of Protestant and Loyalist power in Belfast, for an exultant rally.

Yet there was tension in the room, and it centered on Gerry Adams, the head of the IRA's political front group, Sinn Fein. One of the speakers at the City Hall rally, Adams seemed to be getting a rather mixed reception; handshakes and congratulatory backslaps from most, but cold stares from others. A twitchy fellow in the best of times, he seemed particularly ill at ease that night, his gaze flitting about, his smile tightly set. From the bulkiness beneath his tweed jacket, I wondered if, even here, among his comrades, he felt compelled to wear his bulletproof vest.

His wariness was understandable. As front man for the world's most sophisticated guerrilla organization, Adams had always been adept at upholding one of the great fictions of Northern Ireland: that the Provisional IRA was a highly disciplined and unified force, fighting as one unit in its twenty-five-year campaign to end British rule in the province [illegible] Ireland. While internal schisms and feuds had routinely fractured the IRA's battlefield enemies [illegible] "Provos" had always maintained a public image [illegible]

That image was now in danger of being shat[illegible] had recently "come meeting with Irish government [illegible] politicians were free to move toward beginning a peace

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dialogue. What was still very secret, but already [illegible] the more militant IRA rank and file, was that these discussions had gone far beyond mere preliminaries, and that Adams was now talking directly with the hated British government—a fact that would be revealed publicly in November and lead to a December agreement between Britain and Ireland that would establish a blueprint for future peace talks.

As early as August, however, IRA extremists saw growing circumstantial evidence of Adams's secret "sellout"; at several gatherings, the Sinn Fein leader had come tantalizingly close to repudiating the IRA's "armed struggle"—a British precondition to formal negotiations—and IRA attacks on British soldiers had become increasingly rare. In the days before the Cages Reunion, I'd heard several Republican militants speak bitterly of Adams's appeasement policy, and of the need to get the shooting war back on track.

THE HARD MEN HAVE A VERY GOOD REASON TO SABOTAGE ANY PROSPECT OF PEACE—NOT FLAGS OR GODS, BUT MONEY

That night the tension between the IRA doves and hawks—the "hard men"—promised to reach a new peak. One side effect of the IRA's slide toward civility had been to fuel the long-held suspicions of Protestant Loyalists that Britain was working behind their backs to escape the Northern Ireland morass and force them into a united Ireland. For several weeks, Loyalist paramilitaries had pursued a terror campaign against "soft targets" in the Republican community—taking potshots at Sinn Fein councillors, firebombing their homes—in hopes that IRA hard-liners would retaliate with violence and scuttle Adams's peace initiative. That hadn't happened yet, but the ante had been raised by that afternoon's triumphant march on City Hall; finely attuned to the folk traditions of Belfast violence, all those at the reunion expected it would bring some form of Loyalist "revenge."

"The Prods won't let that go unanswered," one celebrant explained. "No question but someone's getting shot tonight."

Shortly after nine o'clock, a young man stepped to the microphone and waved the boisterous crowd to silence. The home of Sinn Fein councillor Bobby Lavery had just been attacked, he announced, sprayed with gunfire from a car; Bobby's oldest son, twenty-one-year-old Sean, had been hit and was being rushed to the hospital. As the revelers responded in shock, Gerry Adams took to the podium and urged everyone to stay calm, to not respond to this latest Loyalist provocation. When the next report came in just before eleven—that Sean was dead from his gunshot wounds—Adams had already left the party.

The lid did not come off that night. It stayed in place for another two months, through the murders of a half-dozen more Catholics by Loyalist gunmen. It did not come off until one Saturday in late October when Thomas Begley, a young IRA Volunteer, walked into a fish-and-chips shop on the Shankill Road, placed a brown cardboard box on the counter, and blew himself to pieces. Begley's intended victims, leaders of a Loyalist paramilitary cell headquartered above the shop, escaped. Instead, he butchered nine innocents, including two children, and left fifty-nine more wounded.

For both Loyalist and Republican militants, Begley's bomb was like a gift from a provident God. With the IRA again denounced as a terrorist organization by the British government, with Gerry Adams's fragile peace overtures seemingly ruined, the Irish furies could run free once more. Very quickly, the bodies began to pile up: a couple of Catholic sanitation workers in Belfast, two Catholic brothers sitting in their home at night, then an extravagant slaughter at the Rising Sun pub in the Catholic village of Greysteel, where Loyalist gunmen emptied their automatic rifles into the patrons, leaving seven more dead. In that last week in October—one of the bloodiest weeks in Northern Ireland ever—the world's longest-running war was breathed back to life. Amid much hand-wringing and head-shaking, the soothsayers again proclaimed Northern Ireland a devil's riddle, a brutal little enclave trapped in a whirlpool of sectarian violence, engineered by men who simply could not imagine peace.

But there has always been far too much hand-wringing over Northern Ireland, and assigning its violence to religious hatreds or skewed nationalism or mere senselessness is too easy. In fact, the hard men have a very good reason for wanting to sabotage any prospect of peace, one that has less to do with flags or gods and more to do with money.

From the crest of Blackmountain, there is a remarkable view of Belfast. In the far distance are the middle- and upper-class eastern suburbs, leafy oases largely untouched by The Troubles. Closer in is the city center, ravaged by bombings in the 1970s but now revitalized, the ornate Victorian City Hall overshadowed by construction cranes and new office buildings. Running south from the center toward Queen's University is Great Victoria Street—the "Golden Mile"—a ribbon of neon lights, expensive restaurants, and nightclubs.

Directly below the mountain are the row-house ghettos of west Belfast, the vortex of the war, home to the greatest number of gunmen as well as victims. Here, the geography becomes more complicated, a miniature Bosnia. Since the "ethnic cleansing" of the early Seventies, when thousands of Catholics and Protestants



living in mixed neighborhoods were forced out of their homes, west Belfast has existed as a checkerboard of rival, ethnically purified camps, each in the thrall of one of the paramilitary factions. Virtually all the Catholic enclaves are controlled by the Provisional IRA, with their chief rivals in the Republican movement, the less violent Official IRA —or "Stickies"— relegated to a tiny patch of Grosvenor Road. Similarly, the Loyalist Ulster Defense Association (UDA) dominates most of the Protestant neighborhoods while maintaining an uneasy power-sharing arrangement along the Shankill Road, the spiritual heartland of Loyalism, with the more "venerable" and disciplined Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF). The "peace line" fences and strips of no-man's-land that scar the west Belfast hillsides are only a partial help in spotting these divisions; a more reliable guide is the steel-walled British Army forts, bristling with antennas and watchtowers and concertina wire, that sit atop apartment buildings or astride intersections at the worst flashpoints. So complicated is this deadly maze of row houses that, until recently, British soldiers on patrol were guided by tiny "tribal maps" pasted to their gun stocks, Protestant neighborhoods outlined in orange, Catholic ones in green.

When viewed from Blackmountain, Belfast appears to confirm its reputation as a city divided between haves and have-nots. It is also easy from that vantage point to discern the theory of successive British governments about how to end those divisions. Since the violence has always been centered in the ghettos, and the good citizens of the affluent suburbs have never been a problem, The Troubles must be primarily rooted in poverty and require an economic solution. Pump money into Northern Ireland, rebuild Belfast city center, so this reasoning goes, and eventually the malcontents will be seduced away from their ghetto barricades and replace the glitter of downtown.

In pursuit of this policy, the British have transformed Northern Ireland [illegible] sal state as well as a political one. Each year, far more pounds of Brit[illegible] province —nearly [illegible] are collected there [illegible] ly does the British government support the huge number of unemployed —14 percent province wide and [illegible] the [illegible] pay [illegible] the [illegible] West [illegible] the blighted face of west Belfast, improving the

I[illegible]
IRA [illegible]

Photographs by Ken Jacobs

and establishing a network of state-of-the-art leisure centers with basketball courts and indoor swimming pools.

There are the indirect expenditures and the side benefits to the local economy that come with Britain's elaborate security apparatus: the 17,000 soldiers to be fed, the laborers needed to build and maintain the scores of British forts that dot the landscape, the contracting with the many cottage industries that have sprung up to clean away bomb damage or to install bullet-proof glass, metal grillwork, and closed-circuit cameras. It is probably no exaggeration to say that without the rich inflow of British money, the entire legitimate economy of Northern Ireland would collapse.

And there, of course, is the catch, because the paramilitary gunmen rely on the very same financial pipeline for their own survival. With every British pound flowing into Northern Ireland—whether to renovate a housing project or to promote small businesses or even to erect new garrisons—there is the opportunity for the



line, and so ensure the war's perpetuation.

Taking to the Golden Mile in a way the British never intended, the hard men operate protection rackets and extortion schemes, control [illegible] and command obedience through free-ranging "punishment squads." [illegible] work together—through a subterranean network of alliances, cease-fire pacts, and bilateral trade agreements—to keep the whole system running smoothly. Rather than a checkerboard of hostile camps, this Belfast more closely resembles a tightly knit tapestry of cooperating crime syndicates. And since the Achilles' heel in this underground economy is the same as for the legal economy—slavish reliance on Britain's "economic solution"—the godfathers, Republican as well as Loyalist, have a compelling interest in preventing that solution from ever reaching fruition.

Thus, it is a fallacy to suggest the hard men of Northern Ireland cannot imagine peace. They can imagine it all too well. In the autumn of 1993, they gazed down into the abyss of it and saw only their own destruction.

I first came to Northern Ireland in 1986 and have returned regularly ever since. Like all who come to write about The Troubles, I initially focused on the exotic. I struggled through the conflict's complicated math—the myriad paramilitary groups that had formed, splintered, disappeared, only to reappear under new acronyms—and listened to long lectures on why it was or wasn't a religious war. I heard many an expert explanation of how it was impossible to understand the present situation without first studying the signal event—in 1969 or 1690 or 1169, depending on the lecturer—that had set the whole bloody chain of events in motion.

Yet beneath all the layers of history and mythology were hints of a darker, more cynical explanation. In the underground economy operated by the paramilitaries was the suggestion that the war had mutated into something quite different from its origins.

But exploring this shadow world was no easy task. Belfast, I quickly discovered, is a very small and incestuous place, where the killers of one side often have links—school, marriage, prison—to those on the other. Because of this web of communal entanglement, because both haven and danger might come from any direction, the city is a perfect repository for secrets—and no secrets are more jealously guarded than those concerning the paramilitary mafias. Due to the time and persistence I put in, though, some of those involved warmed up to me. The confidences started small—the true motive behind a recent assassination, for example, or where the gunmen bought many of their assault rifles

an mans in central Florida. Earlier in 1988
pened. I was undergoing a peculiar baptism, I
hted, and one that carried a price with it. To
a step into the shadow world, with every
t I shared, I was being held that much more
ountable by the hard men. This became truly
clear to me on a spring night in 1988, when I was
ken to a heavily fortified row house just off Do
lls Road to meet a man whom I will call Martin,
enior commander in the Provisional IRA.

"Do you know what the most dangerous thing
possess in Northern Ireland is?" Martin asked me.
Knowledge. People run into trouble here for
nowing things they're not supposed to. . . . What
ou are looking into, the money aspects, no one in
elfast talks about—it's a death sentence. If you ev-
identify me in any way, I will be destroyed. If that
appens, you will be destroyed. That is not a threat;
's simply a new fact in your life."

Well into the night, Martin and I discussed
he financial underpinnings of the Republican
ar machine. He described the IRA's fund-rais-
ng empire, how it had begun in the west Belfast
nettos and slowly extended to the city center, to
he entire province, spread out to embrace legit-
mate businesses in London and Dublin and hid-
en bank accounts in Switzerland.

"We are fighting a war here," Martin said. "To
age that war, we will raise funds in any way
vailable to us. People can call that gangster-
sm—and certainly you can say some of the oth-
r [paramilitary] groups have fallen into that—but
hat is not true with us. All of the money we
aise goes back into the war effort."

After that meeting with Martin, I crossed a
ertain threshold, accepted—not as a brother,
ertainly; more as a trustworthy gadfly—by hard
nen on both the Republican and Loyalist sides.
Over the years, these men have allowed me
glimpses into the Belfast underworld, and I've
ome to see that this landscape is not a sideshow
o the war but the war's true playing field, the
lace where deals are struck and execution or-
ers drawn. Of the five people I've personally
known who have been murdered in Belfast, on-
y one has been the victim of old-fashioned sec-
arian politics; all the others have been killed
by tripping up on the paramilitary money trail.

"My name is Raymond McCord. I want
ou to use my real name because, if they kill me,
'd like people to know why."

We were meeting last autumn in a cramped of-
ice in downtown Belfast, and Raymond was
cared, the fear registering as a dull stare of his blue
eyes. A burly thirty-eight-year-old Protestant
rom the Rathcoole ghetto of north Belfast, he
a problem with the UDA, the largest and most
uthless Loyalist formation. More specifically, he
had a problem with
pectancy than Raymond McCord.

of The Troubles, when
drinking clubs and protection rackets, the more
paramilitary wanna-bes, usually neighborhood
membership.

From the paramilitary leaders' standpoint, the
punishment squads have been a tremendous
der and fear in the ghettos without putting im-
portant operatives at risk, reliable purveyors of
in their war-chest
donations, training
warriors. And the
squads have per-
formed with zeal.
at least 1,500 more.
with mere beatings
or shootings, they
forms of cruelty and
introduced a whole
new glossary of terms
to the local lan-
is forced to touch his
toes while a bullet is
thodical shattering of
"six-pack" (shots to

shoulder and turning into the bend. The punishments are now often "scheduled," the offender told to come to a certain alley at teatime, say, where the squad will be waiting to administer to him. It is advisable to show up.

For Raymond McCord, the trouble started over a personal argument with a member of one of the UDA's Rathcoole squads. It got worse when, working as a bouncer at a neighborhood bar, he had the temerity to eject several unruly squad members. "So that's what marked me. All of a sudden, I'm an enemy of the Loyalist cause. In the eyes of the UDA command—because they are listening to these guys—I'm a traitor and have to be punished."

In September 1991, a UDA man cornered Raymond's sixteen-year-old son and beat him senseless. Two months later, shots were fired at Raymond as he walked along his street. The climax came in February 1992, when he was ambushed in a pub by more than a dozen squad members. Dragged into a side alley, Raymond was kicked and beaten to the edge of unconsciousness, then breeze-blocked.

"They were climbing up on top of this wall to get more of a drop, then heaving the [flag]stones down, aiming at my joints. I passed out, but I was later told that a couple of the guys went back into the pub, had a pint, then came back and started dropping on me again."

Incredibly, Raymond escaped with little more than a broken arm and shattered legs. While recovering in the hospital, he made a fateful decision.

"These guys say they're patriots defending the Loyalist cause, but they're just a bunch of fuckin' thugs, a mafia. So I thought, 'Someone's got to stand up to them or this is going to go on forever.' There was just no way I was going to sit back and wait for them to come back on me."

Raymond went to the police and pressed charges against five of his assailants. It was a remarkable act; for years, both the local police and British authorities had tried to go after the punishment squads. Virtually without exception, the victims refused to talk, knowing their next punishment would be death.

Raymond's novel decision changed his life dramatically. His neighborhood friends, most of whom he'd known since childhood, suddenly avoided all contact. There were constant death threats, carloads of squad members parked outside his house. His goal became to simply stay alive until his attackers could be brought to trial; after that, he would have to leave Belfast and probably never return. In that pursuit, he wasn't getting much help from the authorities.

"You know, they [the security forces] are always on the telly—'fight back against the terrorists, don't give in'—but when someone does stand up, they just don't want to know you. I've been on them for months trying to find out what plans they have for me when this [trial] is over, and they just keep stalling and passing me on to someone else. It's like they don't understand: if I don't get out of here, I'm a dead man."

The next day, I brought up Raymond's story with a man I will call Jackie, an upper-level officer in the UDA. Loyalist hard men have always had the reputation of operating more as traditional mafiosi—self-interested, the vast majority of money raised for the cause disappearing into their pockets—than their Republican counterparts. It is a reputation fortified by their appearance. Whereas IRA men tend to be austere and understated, favoring blue jeans and imitation leather jackets, Loyalist chieftains have a fondness for gold jewelry, musk-scented cologne, and Seventies-era bouffant hairstyles. When I'd first met Jackie in 1988, he'd been only a UDA capo with one thin gold necklace; now, five years and several promotions later, the jewelry around his neck had multiplied and spread to his fingers, and his permed hair was dyed an intriguing blend of metallic hues. He didn't seem pleased when I asked about Raymond McCord.

"I'm not all that familiar with his story—I'm not up in that area much—but I understand he's been touting [informing] to the authorities.



British soldier in Belfast

Photograph by David Turnley / Black Star

urned in some of his own mates, from what I unerstand."

When I told Raymond's version of events, ackie nodded knowingly.

"Well, you see, that's exactly my point. If he ad a problem with some of the [punishment quad] lads, he should have taken the matter up ith the UDA commander in his district. Touting to the police, we can't tolerate that. The sitation here requires we maintain a certain level f civic discipline."

I asked if, in this case, "discipline" meant execution.

Jackie shrugged. "We've got a war on here, a war where our very cultural identity is at stake. We don't have time to fuck around with people like Raymond McCord."

On one cold, drizzling night, a friend—I will call him Seamus—took me on a tour of the Republican drinking clubs along the Falls Road. I'd known Seamus, a gregarious and charming man in his early forties, for several years. Born and raised in the Catholic ghettos of west Belfast, he had, by all appearances, escaped that world to become a successful businessman, a family man with several teenage children.

After a while, the drinking clubs blended together. It was more than the cigarette smoke and beer-soaked carpeting, or that all the customers seemed to sport fading blue tattoos on their forearms. The clubs shared a restless energy, as if everyone were waiting for something to happen that was long overdue, a sensation reinforced by the clubs' exteriors—floodlights and closed-circuit cameras, steel mesh over the windows to thwart sniper fire and grenade attacks.

Leaving one club, Seamus stopped on the sidewalk to gaze down the Falls Road. Clouds were tumbling over the western headlands, and from somewhere overhead came the steady thump of a British Army surveillance helicopter. The unchanging pitch meant the helicopter was hovering in place over some corner of the city that interested its crew. Seamus stared in one direction, then the other. "A lot of life played out on this road," he said. "A lot of British soldiers, a lot of innocent Catholics. The Loyalists used to come by at closing time to pick out someone to do. Right here"—he pointed to the short stretch of asphalt before us—"I can remember eight men dying."

The section of the Falls we stood on had earned the nickname Murder Mile for the scores of people killed there over the years. That night it was quiet. Cast in the yellow glow of high-intensity street lamps, it looked much like any other working-class commercial street after hours: garbage-strewn vacant lots, shuttered shops, deteriorating row houses.

"It's different now," he said. "Everything's different."

Returning to [illegible] and headed [illegible] ent neighborhood [illegible] dos and the patrons were in suits and party dresses. The discotheque owner, a man I will call Kenneth, seemed pleased to see us—overjoyed, in fact. He greeted Seamus with a hearty handshake, threw an arm around my [illegible] friends, and led us to a prime table overlooking the dance floor. When he rushed off, on his way to the bar to order us complimentary drinks, Seamus whispered to me:

"This club is under the protection of the Provisional IRA. You wouldn't know it now, but Kenneth was very resistant about signing on at first—simply didn't see the need for security. So then he got bombed a couple of times. Now he loves to see me come around."

In addition to the other truths about his life—prosperous businessman, devoted father—my friend Seamus is a powerful functionary in the shadow economy of Belfast, a portfolio manager in the IRA's underworld business empire. He sees no contradiction in this. He is an Irish patriot, and the money raised goes to further the "armed struggle."

> THEY'D BROKEN HIS ARM AND LEGS. "THESE GUYS SAY THEY'RE PATRIOTS," HE SAID. "THEY'RE JUST A BUNCH OF FUCKIN' THUGS"

He is also, in a perverse sort of way, a peacemaker. The reason the drinking clubs along the Falls Road are so quiet, why Murder Mile is not living up to its reputation these days, is that the paramilitary godfathers have established co-prosperity spheres that require the violence to be controlled and outwardly directed, a policy implemented by men like Seamus. Even Kenneth is probably grateful on one level, now firmly under Seamus's protective wing, he won't be leaned on or bombed by another paramilitary organization.

This is not to suggest that the hard men are performing a valuable civic function, or even that they are motivated by the patriotic causes they claim to represent. Although even its most bitter enemies concede that the Provisional IRA funnels most of its money back into the war machine, that rationale [illegible] the other paramilitary formations. Members of the Official IRA, [illegible] the Republican movement, are commonly regarded as [illegible] were shut down [illegible] train version of "[illegible] the young thugs [illegible] riot. Army [illegible] slaughtering [illegible] Protestants [illegible]

only a tiny fraction of the millions the UDA and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) raise through their business fronts, tax frauds, and shakedowns ever reaches the Loyalist war chest.

The slide into outright gangsterism began not coincidentally—with the first big influx of British money in the early 1980s. As part of the ambitious campaign to remake Belfast, huge tracts of the west-side ghettos were slated for demolition, and large companies—their insurance underwritten by the British government—were energetically wooed back to the bombed-out city center. For the hard men, it was the golden years.



The protection rackets were refined and expanded across the city. Cashing in on the construction boom, the paramilitaries repackaged themselves as labor brokers with a decidedly hard-sell approach: hire our crews and the job will get done without pilferage or strikes, or hire your own crews and buy them bulletproof vests.

No one was immune from the squeeze of the hard men, not even the British civil servants sent to Belfast to oversee the redevelopment projects. One night I was introduced to a man I will call Trevor, a former manager for the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the principal government agency in charge of public housing. In the mid-1980s, Trevor was assigned to an urban-renewal project on the lower Shankill Road, an area under the control of a notorious UDA unit.

"The intimidation started the moment I got there," Trevor explained. "My second day on the [illegible] UDA command [illegible] sends a couple of lads up to the office to invite me over for tea. When I get there, McClatchey is holding this teletext and he starts telling me all about myself, where I'd gone to school, where my brothers and sisters worked, everything. Then he says, 'You take care of us, we'll take care of you.' Well, I understood what that meant."

As soon as construction began, the UDA placed the job site under the protection of its "security service" and assumed total control of the operation. Work crews were handpicked from among a pool of idle UDA foot soldiers, and a nice nest egg was set up for the local UDA command with the addition of two or three ghost workers to the payroll. All went peacefully until Trevor's supervisor decided to rock the boat.

"He gets the brilliant idea of standing up to McClatchey by taking the ghosts off the [employment] rolls. When the pay packets didn't come in, McClatchey sends his second-in-command round to the office. He walks in, starts up a chainsaw, and, without a word, saws a desk right in half. He then puts the saw up to the neck of one of my co-workers and very calmly asks, 'Where are those other pay packets?' So the ghosts went back on the payroll."

Soon the hard men advanced to the next stage of crime syndicalism—collusion. In the 1980s, the chieftains of the various factions, while still publicly committed to one another's annihilation, came to a series of very private understandings: recognition of one another's free enterprise zones, joint administration of the rackets, even "integrated" crews of Loyalists and Republicans working side by side at construction sites. It gave rise to one of the great ironies of The Troubles: the death toll declined steadily as the commanders realized that their old ways—tit-for-tat murders, city-center bombings, attacks on one another's drinking clubs—were simply bad for business.

But the networks of collusion produced ugly side effects; it suddenly became very difficult to tell who was killing whom whenever the underground peace broke down and a paramilitary leader was assassinated. In the mid-1980s a number of Belfast commanders of the Loyalist UVF began turning up dead, and each time, a Republican faction came forward to claim "credit" for the hits. The story swirling through the underground, however, was that the murders had actually been carried out by thuggish elements in the UDA—the UVF's brethren in the Loyalist camp—with logistical support from the IRA and other Republican groups. The bloodletting had little to do with politics; it was simply a gangland turf war

r control of the Belfast protection rackets. By
time the feud was over, the UVF had been
imated, the UDA disgraced, and the paramil-
aries, scrambling to save face, announcing that
era of collusion had ended.

In the wake of the scandal, the British stepped
the activities of the anti-racketeering police
it, C13, a special task force devoted to crack-
g the paramilitaries by going after their hidden
nk assets, cooked business books, and dummy
rporations. The newly reconstituted war on
me got under way with great fanfare. With
gularity, C13 proclaimed victory after victory
ainst the underworld, the shutting down of il-
gal drinking clubs, whole wagonfuls of arrests.
ft unsaid in the press releases was that those ar-
sted were primarily paramilitary grunts or "or-
hary decent criminals," rarely the hard men.
evertheless, in the early 1990s the British
amed to be on the verge of crushing the "gang-
ers," just as they had been on the verge of
ushing the "terrorists" for more than two
ecades.

This was not a view shared by a middle-aged
an—I will call him Richard—whom I met last
immer. For days I had discreetly searched for a
usinessman willing to talk about the current
ate of Belfast's protection rackets. Only Richard,
he owner of a retail business with about ten em-
lovees, had agreed. When he ushered me into his
rivate office in downtown Belfast, Richard was
racious, offered me cigarettes and coffee, but
ontinued to stare at me with a haunted, vague-
sad expression, as if he would have much pre-
erred I simply leave.

"I can tell you from direct experience that ev-
rything the [C13] authorities say is fantasy," he
old me. "The situation isn't better; it's far worse.
Used to be the paras would send someone around
he shop, hit me up for forty, fifty quid—say it was
or the prisoners' welfare fund or the war orphan
und or some damned thing. Today, it is a mafia,
s professional a mafia as any you will find in the
world. Today they have accountants who come in,
ook over your books, decide what you can pay,
nd bill you accordingly. You get a phone call:
'We've put you down for an annual donation of
,500 pounds, payable in quarterly installments;
e'll send a lad around tomorrow to collect the
irst installment.' And when the lad shows up I
ave the money waiting right here. If I didn't, my
hop would be blown up, or I would be killed, or
ny workers would be shot—maybe all three."

When I mentioned the British government's
laim of great progress in breaking the rackets, that
ey've persuaded a number of businessmen to step
orward and identify their tormentors, Richard
aughed.

"An absolute bluff. Where are these busi-
nessmen? Where are the trials that are putting the
[illegible]
[illegible]
I know ever[illegible]
C13 has told them, 'Work with us, we'll set up
a sting, and we'll do it in a way they'll never
trace it back to you.' [illegible] C13
think they're [illegible]
lucky not to get [illegible]
have some hero status, [illegible]
businessmen [illegible]
erate on a sting], they'd have been
dead before [illegible]

I asked whether, [illegible]
it was claimed, collusion had ceased.
Richard laughed again. "Let me
put it this way. A whole load [illegible]
paying out 8,000 pounds a year,
4,000 to the [Provisional] IRA,
4,000 to the UDA. One day I get
a call from the IRA saying they're
raising my annual contribution to 4,300. A few
days later, the UDA call. 'We're raising ours to
4,300.' What does that tell you? They're all the
same: IRA, UDA, UVF, INLA, they're all just ribs
running off the same prick."

Before I left, Richard [illegible]
[illegible]
handled it gingerly, seeming both awed and fright-
ened by the feel of it in his hand.

"I'll tell you this," he said. "If the police come
down tomorrow and find this, I'm finished. I'll
have no chance. The paramilitaries will be on to me
[illegible]
what this is really all about—and that's
when the real trouble starts."

Today, it is only natural that people have
again started to talk of peace in Northern Ireland.
December's agreement between Ireland and
Britain was designed to let formal talks with Sinn
Fein begin [illegible]
[illegible]
derscored by a whole new wave of random killings
of Catholics as well as a bungled attempt to smug-
gle in a gigantic cache of explosives and Kalash-
nikovs. [illegible]
[illegible]
maintained, as if by appointment to be just one more
midsize European city it can be made so. There
[illegible]
trian arcades are crowded with shoppers at all
[illegible]
cific scene, the authorities immediately adopt a
[illegible]
smoke at a bomb site [illegible]
[illegible]

In the ghettos, by contrast, nothing much has changed. Raymond McCord continues to get death threats. The Loyalist paramilitaries, shattered [illegible] outwitted and isolated by Gerry Adams's peace initiative, have roared back to life. For many in the UDA, the fact that it was their men who walked into the Rising Sun in Greysteel and gunned down unarmed civilians is a point of pride; it proves they are, once again, a fighting force to be reckoned with. For many in the IRA, Thomas Begley's devastating bomb on the Shankill Road is a welcome symbol, a reminder that they have not tired, that they will not be appeased.

When I asked Jackie, the UDA man, what the future holds, he was upbeat.

"People have been coming back to the organization in droves. It's like the [bombing on] Shankill Road and [British prime minister] Major's dealing with the IRA was a wake-up call: 'look, we're being sold down the river and we're all just sittin' here takin' it.' The entire community seems more united, more committed than it's been in years."

What Jackie left unsaid is that the recent events have also enabled the UDA to momentarily shed its gangster image in the Protestant community and reapply the patriotic cloak to its underworld fund-raising tactics. For Jackie and the other Belfast hard men, all news—the massacre of innocents, the suggestion of peace—is good news, for it is all convertible into reasons to keep fighting, to keep raising money for the cause.

Talking with Jackie reminded me of a conversation I'd had with Martin, the IRA commander, [illegible] slaughter, before the renaissance of the Loyalist paramilitaries. We'd been discussing the IRA's financial outlook, and Martin had admitted that money was very tight just then. He blamed the situation on the worldwide recession but was confident that [illegible] would the IRA's war capabilities.

He was almost certainly right. Today, the IRA brings in nearly $10 million a year from the shadow economy. As the anti-racketeering specialists in C13 have concentrated on closing their drinking clubs and business fronts, the Provisionals have diversified their operations into a bewildering array of money-generating schemes, everything from the penny-ante selling of contraband cigarette lighters on Belfast streets, to video- and computer-game piracy, to smuggling bovine antibiotics into Europe from cut-rate labs in Brazil. According to police, they've also expanded into the counterfeit designer-jean business and have a lucrative sideline with antiques stolen in the Irish Republic and resold at antiques fairs in the British Midlands. The IRA has truly become the world's first multinational guerrilla conglomerate.

And it has increasingly become a legal conglomerate, beyond the reach of C13 or any police force to dismantle. A cooperative of some 300 taxis on the Falls Road that are owned and operated by the Provisionals in west Belfast grosses approximately $1 million a year, a sum reported to and taxed by the British government. Whatever "dirty" money raised from the Belfast protection and extortion rackets that is not needed for immediate operating expenses is smuggled into the Irish Republic, laundered through one of an estimated three dozen IRA-owned pubs around Dublin, then deposited in legal bank accounts.

All of which means the Provisionals no longer have to live the hand-to-mouth existence of most guerrilla groups; through prudent financial planning and entrepreneurial acumen, they have achieved long-term fiscal security, a solid base of [illegible] assets and investments to draw on—the estimated range to as much as $60 million—an endowment fund for the waging of future war.

"Fact is," Martin said, "a lot of our money now is coming from legitimate sources and there's no way the Brits can touch it. So now they can't bleed us to death and they can't starve us to death. That's why we're going to win."

But perhaps they have already won. As long as the British remain and the Northern Ireland issue stays unsolved, the IRA and its paramilitary brethren have not only a rationale for existence but a financial fount that keeps the underground economy flourishing and keeps them clothed, fed, and armed. If the British ever leave, the hard men lose not only that subsidy but also their incentive for working together to uphold the underground non-aggression pact; they will then have to go beyond slaughtering the innocent to prove their patriotism, and start killing one another in earnest in the long-anticipated final battle for primacy in Northern Ireland. In a certain grotesque fashion, then, the British pursuit of an "economic solution" has actually brought a measure of peace. And defying the old maxim that war destroys economies, this war has created one rock-solid so long as the British stay and the flow of blood is kept to a steady trickle.

At the end of our meeting, I posed an idea to Martin. If it was really the intention of the IRA to hasten a British departure from Northern Ireland, I said, perhaps there was a better way than renewing the "armed struggle"—or even sending out peace feelers. Perhaps the most effective tactic would be for the IRA to buy some airtime in London and thank the British taxpayers for their twenty-five years of financial largesse. Could anything sicken the British more? Martin was greatly amused by the idea.

"It will always be IRA policy that the British have to leave Northern Ireland." He smiled. "But maybe it's better they don't leave just yet."

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DAYS WITH CECILIA

By Anthony Giardina

My days with Cecilia are cluttered with the props of the slim British novels my wife devours. Half-eaten [illegible] with the pale milk scud lying discouragingly on top; that sort of thing. I often [illegible] when Cecilia sleeps I can most often be found combing the police log of already read metropolitan newspapers for the details of grisly murders. It goes [illegible] I am perpetually behind things. I enjoy a strange identification with the spinster librarians in those books of my wife's, those perpetually hopeful overage girls who live in a fog out of which they cannot quite see to the fact of the balding pediatrician's less-than-honest intentions. But in most ways we are not alike. My life, as I prefer to view it, is full of facts, closely looked at.

I'd like to say, for instance, that Cecilia is bright, or exceptionally pre[illegible] I wouldn't know how to compare her with the average child; we don't see any. Occasionally we pass them in the park, but though Cecilia's head always perks up in these instances, as though she'd like nothing better than to rub noses with another ten-month-old, I don't think I could bear to get involved in one of those conversations I overhear between parents on park benches. They have nothing whatsoever in common outside of the base facts of parenthood, so what gets talked about is Justin's progress with the walker, Julie's teething habits and extraordinary verbal felicity, and the problems poor Mrs. L—— is having with her son, who at sixteen months has yet to take his first step. Let's not fool ourselves—beneath this seemingly casual comparison of achievement lies the most savage competition, a clawing for the superiority of one's own over another barely masked. To hell with Justin and Julie, I say; Cecilia and I push on.

She is a happy child; I think I can say that without too crippling a sense of doubt. She likes nothing better than to grasp the edge of an end table with one hand and lift herself so that she's standing almost unsupported (can you do *that*, Justin and Julie?), and, in recognition of the feat, crow with delight. At such moments, I am superfluous. I am the man on the couch in his underwear, trying not to catch furtive glimpses of himself in whatever mirror happens to be lurking nearby. I am her caretaker; I clock the hours between waking and sleeping, with time out for naps. My wife doesn't come home until after she's asleep most days; I know why, and I don't care to comment. There is a ruddy and obnoxious economist she's taken up with, a fellow member of her department at the university. A mutual friend informed me, expecting I'd do something about it, but I haven't, and suspect I won't.

By trade I am a shop teacher, part-time. My employer is a very expensiv[illegible] private middle school two town[illegible] away. It sits on the side of a hill o[illegible] land donated by one of those fam[illegible] lies—you know the ones I mean—whose name conjures an aura of sac[illegible] rosanct white privilege but whom [illegible] cannot imagine without the accom[illegible] panying vision of pristine white bod[illegible] parts squatting atop porcelain chan[illegible] ber pots. Perhaps this image is a resu[illegible] of the fact that Cecilia shits so much[illegible] but I like to believe that my mind [illegible] not so cause-and-effect. The re[illegible] buildings of the grounds are ancien[illegible] brick and smell of the exertions o[illegible] generations. The place is athletic [illegible] all hell and justifiably proud of it[illegible] many trophies. In a room that migh[illegible] have served the lathers of the eigh[illegible] teenth century, I train the boy[illegible] to shave a block of wood straigh[illegible] smooth, and square. For the satisfac[illegible] tory performance of this job, I am re[illegible] quired only two afternoons a week[illegible] Shop is not a high priority at th[illegible] Russell Academy.

That I happen to be doing this job[illegible] well, we're all old enough not to re[illegible] quire explanations anymore, or to be[illegible] lieve them even when they're offered[illegible] My own shop teacher from twenty[illegible] years past was Mr. Talanian, an A[illegible] menian rumored to have thrown a[illegible] hammer from twenty feet at a wise[illegible] cracking boy. Like my classmates o[illegible] those days, I saw little beyond the tru[illegible] ism that shop teachers are brutes. Ei[illegible] ther that or something less. So m[illegible] boys—my Barneses and Neuwirths an[illegible] Hulls—view me, I'm sure, in an opaqu[illegible]

"I Live in Yonville," was published in the

ht. I am dim and incomprehensible
my soiled blue shop coat. The light
caged and ancient, of a piece with
sell. Once a boy nearly took a fin
off learning to use the electric
. I saved him in the nick of time
d watched how, five minutes lat-
laughing, he had managed to for-
both the saved finger and my
ck heroism—a necessary part of
job, as I see it—and would most
rely soon be back to making fun
me behind my back. No matter.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays,
en I am at work, Cecilia stays
h Mrs. Leaver, who charges me
r dollars an hour for the service.
is a decent arrangement, and
se enough so that, after the last
the boys have left the shop for
e day, I am free to linger, in the
op or on the grounds, enjoying
e fading light and the last mo-
ents of relaxed freedom before
ing to pick up Cecilia. It is at
ch moments, as the low light
des in under the blinds onto the
ean shop table or as I stand at
e edge of the playing fields, that
allow myself my one moment of
ntastic longing: for a friend like
ose friends one encounters in
lms, a short, thick-bellied, wide-
ced man with a name like Colin
r George, either married or in
onstant woman trouble, but not
rothered much by either state of af-
airs, a fellow shop or perhaps
athematics teacher, who, at the
nd of the day, is always available
nd eager for a hop down to the
ub (in my imagination there is
ne at the foot of the Russell
rounds), where we might sit and chat
bout football scores, all the while en-
aging in our true business, which is
what I will call a muscular and disci-
plined appreciation of the qualities of
ight and silence.

Such a moment—altogether male,
as I see it, but I'm willing to be con-
vinced otherwise—is the one thing
lacking in my days. No such friend ex-
ists. Colin is an invention of the film
writers. We are all busy, and have to
plan even the briefest, least satisfactory
of encounters weeks in advance. There
is no pub at the foot of the hill. The
long playing fields stretch out these
days in shades of ocher and sienna,

but as I stand at the edge
where Mrs. Leaver lives with her
children or with
line of tricycles and children's toys
block her path to the door. There is



Mr. Leaver, apparently; at some inde-
for the hills. On the faces of the two
Leaver children, a boy and a girl, but
neediness of the abandoned. They are
angry children, given to kicking walls

Mrs. Leaver notices none of this,
course, and screams at them to stop
kicking, meanwhile turning back to
me with a broad smile to chat a bit
or to ask after my adventures in the
soon as she is handed over, and I feel
a certain guilt at plotting my afte

the day. Certain books and

the unbearable chaos of a shag in

I see the two of us groping and

There are only the two of us in
home, myself behind the wheel,
though we are negotiating a kind
of minefield, while Cecilia hums
one of those secret harmonies
which signify to me that, for her,
the minefield is all contained in
the dense foliage of Mrs. Leaver's

There was a woman before Mrs.
Leaver, Mrs. O'Connor. She dis-
approved of us. Babies belonged
world had seen fit to discard this
truth constituted the basis of Mrs.
universe, and the argument had

principles of going with the grain to
ly ate, poor thing," Mrs. O'Connor
Nuremberg judges

don't, after all, belong with babies. I've

let me count the ways. Cecilia's the [illegible] with aerosol cans and magazines with [illegible] of advanced [illegible] and twisted postures, and this notion of men as [illegible] another one of them. I was recently in a diner in some nearby town, feeding Cecilia her favorite lunch of mashed bananas and Cheerios, when the local execs started trooping in. One man in particular was noticeable. He could not get a knife clean enough, kept sending them back. Then he started on the forks. There was a pronounced tic in the man's facial gesture as he sent back utensil after utensil, a kind of astonished blinking. And as I mused on what horrors of unnatural activity had forced him into such neurotic behavior, I noticed myself mashing bananas and Cheerios together with a rhythm that might, from his table, have looked at least equally strange. The only reason I hesitate to carry this argument further is that I might find myself agreeing with Mrs. O'Connor, and no thanks, I'd rather not.

One night last week my wife came [illegible] at her usual time—nine o'clock—and headed straight for the bath, her usual practice. I generally have something simmering on the stove when she gets home—this particular night I had cooked pork chops in olive oil and rosemary, with a roast-pepper dressing—but I make sure it is something that will keep and not dry out during the ritual bath taking. I don't want you to think she is one of those women—or ours one of those marriages—constructed of cold silences and an ironclad respect for the Unsaid, though on the surface that might be what it appears. I think of it as a peculiarly *living* thing, and for that reason don't need [illegible] to the lateness of the hour or the lack of interest she displays in Cecilia's welfare. By this time, Cecilia is snug in her bed, wrapped in a double diaper and a woolen yellow sleeper. In her bath, my wife washes out what there is to be washed out of her, [illegible] the economist Bruce Friedman. I could ask after him, and after a pause and a considering lift of the eyebrows I'm sure my wife would tell me everything, or nearly everything, without tears or mortification. I like that aspect of things, and for that reason have never felt compelled to ask. I waited this night outside the bath until she'd done what she had to do and then stepped in.

The bath is not quite full length; it's a bit cramped, if the truth be told, so a body lying full length looks somewhat less resplendent than it ought to. My wife's breasts have long since returned to their pre-pregnancy shape (she quit nursing at three weeks), but her middle retains a pleasing lumpen aspect, the last evidence of Cecilia's nesting. She's a good-looking woman whose body, unfortunately, leaves me cold. Has since the day she brought Cecilia home. Hence, Bruce. So we can leave that subject and move on. But this one night I sat on the toilet and stared at her and waited for her to acknowledge me. She was soaping her breasts at the time. I was wearing a blue bathrobe that had seen better days. (Get on with it! you charge at this juncture. Fix yourself up, and perhaps your life's problems will be solved! I will try to ignore you.)

"How did it go?" I asked.

"Department meeting," she answered, still not looking up. "The usual shit."

"Did you eat lunch?" I asked, in my mothering tone.

She told me what she'd eaten, and then some departmental gossip. For her, there is still the illusion that these late evenings are caused by work. I helped dry her off, a process I enjoy, in large part because it reminds me of drying Cecilia. Then she ate the pork chops and drank the wine I'd poured her, and the two of us got into bed and lay there watching a Michael Caine spy movie from the Sixties. It was of the genre where the filmmakers tried very hard to distinguish their man from James Bond, with thick glasses and such. I believe they called this, at the time, a Greater Realism. In other words, there was absolutely nothing unusual about this night except what happened midway through the spy picture. My bathrobe happened to be open, unintentionally, and at the moment when Michael Caine was about to be tortured my wife reached over and lifted my penis. It is quite a long one (or so I've been told), and as she held it there, limp but extended upward by her grasp, it bisected the im[illegible]ge of Michael Caine's grimacing fac[illegible] She held it for the length of time [illegible] took for the torture to be complete[illegible] and then put it back in place. A com[illegible]mercial came on, and we lay there i[illegible] a kind of awed silence. As soon as th[illegible] movie came back on I began reportin[illegible] on Cecilia's day, my concern about a[illegible] incipient ear infection, etc. My wife li[illegible]tened, quite patient and interested[illegible] but not as though this information be[illegible]ing imparted was anything she was go[illegible]ing to have to act on. In a short while[illegible] before the movie was finished, she fe[illegible] asleep. I stayed up awhile. I checked o[illegible] Cecilia. It was early spring but it ha[illegible] snowed during the night, and outside[illegible] our windows I could see it falling. [illegible] was trying to connect things, and hav[illegible]ing a hard time of it. In my mind wa[illegible] the image of Bruce Friedman thrash[illegible]ing away between my wife's thighs i[illegible] a manner I imagined as resembling th[illegible] behavior of a crazed member of th[illegible] college crew team. Then there was th[illegible] holding of my penis. In her little roo[illegible] at the top of the house my daughte[illegible] slept, and outside was the snow, gen[illegible]tle and unthreatening and more a re[illegible]minder that winter was over than th[illegible] some new and tremendous difficult[illegible] lay ahead. I planned my lesson for th[illegible] next day, and then I, too[illegible] got into bed and fell asleep[illegible]

Cecilia was up early the next da[illegible] so I changed her and fed her a bottle[illegible] Then I sat her on her high chair an[illegible] let her play with some teething thing[illegible] while I fixed my wife her eggs. I[illegible] seemed to me, as I did these things[illegible] that something was noticeably differ[illegible]ent. I went through these rituals tryin[illegible] to put my finger on it and failing. Eac[illegible] time I tried to affix this difference t[illegible] a specific prospect—would my penis f[illegible]nally stand? would my wife stop seein[illegible] the economist Friedman?—I foun[illegible] these things to be insignificant an[illegible] unworthy of the larger pleasure I wa[illegible] experiencing.

I pondered all this while Cecili[illegible] gummed her Mr. Happy toy and th[illegible] yellow eggs bubbled on the griddle[illegible] My wife was late for her first class an[illegible] barely had time to gobble the egg[illegible] kiss Cecilia, and dash out the door. [illegible] got no kiss. I had a cup of coffee an[illegible]

d the obituary of a man who had en influential in the Eisenhower dministration. At noon I drove Ce- ia to Mrs. Leaver's and then went elf to the shop, arriving fifteen nutes before class, a decent interval, d began laying out materials for the y's lesson in soldering.

It went fairly well. Hot metal is quite leasant thing to work with, but dan- rous, and Barnes, Neuwirth, Hull, nd the others never appear so vul- erable as when they first hold the hot ldering iron in their hands and be- n moving the liquid metal around. here are moments in the day — this as one of them — when their faces, vaged as they are by the crocus shoots incipient puberty, seem to strip back the point where they appear as ba- ies again, naked and innocent as Ce- ilia, with powdered bums and fingers ke the pincers of crabs. On certain af- ernoons when Cecilia naps and I fall sleep for a brief nap as well, I have ex- erienced moments of awakening when, for the first three or four sec- nds, the facts of my existence seem to have escaped me completely, and I don't immediately know who or where am, or what action is next required of me. It has occurred to me that such moments—that waiting for the facts to catch up—might constitute our firmest grasp of reality. I was thinking this, anyway, as I watched Barnes, Neuwirth, and Hull grapple with the mysteries of soldering. Soon they would be skilled enough to draw erotic figures in hot metal. I have seen them etch enormous phalluses and breasts in wood; it seems to be their primary joy, once they have mastered a skill, to im- press one another with the lewd pur- poses to which it can be put. But they were not yet at this point with solder- ing; that is, the facts hadn't caught up, and they stood at their places, holding their irons with a sort of wondering detachment.

When the class was over, I went in- to the teachers' room and had a cup of coffee. I hadn't been inside this room since my first day at Russell, when the headmaster, in the midst of a tour of the facilities, had insisted I step inside and "meet the staff." Two women speaking French in a corner of the room had scared me off that day. By now you will have guessed that I am a

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Doubleday

to say that these two rare birds showed contempt for me. We caught them in the middle of a discussion. They were discussing Flaubert's "Un Coeur Simple," as I recall, and did not take to being interrupted. Oh, they were very civil, but when you've been around academics as long as I have—especially low-grade academics, the not-yet-promoted, the private-school types—you begin to sort out the ones who are afraid of you. God knows where this fear comes from—perhaps it's my very shagginess, the air I seem to give off, with my long hair and blue shop coat, of being a rough guy, that makes them fluff their feathers and nest more defensively over the egg of their pretensions. Or perhaps it is not fear at all but something else. Whatever, they gave off a skunkish stink that day, and I have kept away ever since. So you can imagine the degree of confidence—the extent of my good mood—as I sauntered into the teachers' room that day and sought out the cup with my name on it that had been gathering dust on the shelf for nearly a year.

I was wearing my blue shop coat still—no shame there—and, well, if you must know, I was hoping to find [illegible]. It was not until I'd poured the coffee and sat down to drink that I noticed there was only one other person in the room. A woman sat on the edge of a sofa puffing great blue streams into the air from a slender brown cigarette. She peered at me through this haze and said, after a moment, "You're the shop teacher, aren't you?"

"Yes."

She stared out the window.

"Teaching Thomas Hardy is very difficult," she said.

It was all she said. Her smoking was languid and highly studied, of a piece with [illegible] severe neckline of her dress. I wondered what the proper response was: "Teaching soldering is likewise a bitch"? Would that have started us off on a stimulating interdisciplinary chat? I'll never know, because I said nothing. Instead, I began thinking of Mrs. Leaver, who was, in any case, never far from my mind during these stolen minutes after the close of shop. What would Mrs. Leaver have made of such a comment, among her toys and the persistent smell of urine? At the moment, I felt a silent communion with Mrs. Leaver, knew a desire to join up with her, put my hands into the muck of child rearing, to smell the soft wet smell and draw to my nose the small astonished body of Cecilia. There was nothing for me in this room, I understood, and was about to go when a new man entered. Obviously in a hurry, he shouted, "Hello, Peg," quickly poured himself a cup of coffee, and bolted it, standing stiff and upright before the urn, taking it black. He was a thin man, with suede patches on the elbows of his jacket and the sort of head that seems to make itself over after the age of forty, so that no trace of the youth he might once have enjoyed remained. After he noticed me, he stood staring for several seconds, rapidly blinking his eyes in the manner of a man trying to wake up quickly, with no time to enjoy the fuzzy-headedness of waking.

Finally, as if something had just then occurred to him, he half shouted, "Shop, is it?"

I nodded, he checked his watch and ran for the door, and that was the end of that.

When I picked up Cecilia that day, I was more than usually solicitous of Mrs. Leaver. I asked if she'd like me to fix her something, a cup of tea or a drink. She said she wouldn't mind, and of course it was bourbon, which I poured over ice and didn't take any for myself. Cecilia was more or less content in my arms as we watched Mrs. Leaver drink.

"Your wife teaches, doesn't she?" Mrs. Leaver asked. She already knew this and was just making conversation, but I answered that yes, she did, and yes, Cecilia was my responsibility, day in, day out. It must be difficult, she said, and I answered no, it really isn't.

"With your wife away all the time, I mean," she said.

Well, here is the juncture where things become problematical, because though I find it difficult to talk to the [illegible] world, there are fine distinctions in any life that they might be able to receive with less effort than Mrs. Leaver. You see, I had an answer for her, but I wasn't sure I ought to give it. Was it difficult with my wife away all the time? Well, no. The birth of children brings on a kind of winnowing, as I see it. We are brought to the edge of a cliff and asked to dive. It's perfectly natural that some will prefer not to. In most cases, though, one of the partners will be willing and the other left to find some distraction somewhere. The roles get sorted quite satisfactorily, and the only problem comes when, at the end of the day, the two meet and try to proceed as though everything is perfectly rational. What can there possibly be to talk about over the stir-fried chicken when one has been diving off a cliff all day while the other has been operating a staple gun or conjugating French verbs? That we try to communicate at all is where we run into trouble, and consequently it is all a story of abandonment and betrayal, a fact Mrs. Leaver would readily understand if I could find words simple enough. My wife would like me to make wild love to her every night just to assure her that my day has been like hers. But I find I cannot; the act has become inessential. Would Mrs. Leaver comprehend any of this if I made the attempt to speak, or is it better to leave it alone, unspoken and therefore brought closer to its true weight in the world? It occurred to me just then that Mrs. Leaver is my Colin, this ratty house of hers our leafy pub. And as I watched her down her bourbon, I thought: yes, all right, it'll do. She's my man, my silent compatriot. I wrapped up Cecilia and drove home.

My wife was there already, a surprise. Her little Volvo sat parked in the driveway like a note left there for me. Inside, she was cooking. It was clear right away she had come home to save her marriage. I imagined somewhere on campus the economist Friedman running hard laps to sweat off the effects of his neglect. It was angel-hair pasta she was cooking, with zucchini and prosciutto. Lovely. A recipe from the old days, before Cecilia, when my wife still liked to cook.

I kissed her and busied myself with feeding Cecilia. Already I could see I had done something wrong. My wife was pouting as she lay strips of prosciutto on a plate. That she was here, she believed, ought to have altered things more than was presently visible. What

I wanted to tell her was that the rhythms of a baby's day are eternal, as weather events more climactic than an errant wife's return. As the lifeboats were lowered off the *Titanic*, I imagine all the mothers on board cooing their little jars of Gerber's; six o'clock is six o'clock, iceberg or no iceberg. I fed Cecilia and felt my wife's presence, and thought of the spurned economist under the shower, the hot wash of water parting his thin hair (mine is marvelously long and thick), lathering over his beard like lather. In my mind's eye, the water became hot metal and there was a soldering gun in my hand, which I used to part his pale trembled cheeks . . . well, enough of that. I hadn't known I was this jealous, and I'm not sure even now whether it wasn't an effect of the imbalance caused by my wife's sudden appearance. I could smell the butter and cream now. Some sensual promise seemed to hang on the air, but what I might to do, what action to take, eluded me completely.

During dinner, I was, as usual, solicitous of Cecilia. It's what she's grown used to, after all, my presence at dinner, humming and murmuring shy endearments. These annoy my wife, which is one of the reasons her returning late has never bothered me. I kept refilling my wineglass like an underappreciated husband eager for his wife's attention, and I kept resisting these pleas, turning to Cecilia and making up reasons to fuss. To tell the truth, I was up against one of those black holes, those unexpected places where the lines of one's behavior go underground. If you were to ask me even now why I was resisting my wife, I could offer you any number of explanations, but none of them, I am sure, would be even close to the truth. As far as I could tell, the problem was fairly simple: we wanted different things.

What *I* wanted was to watch the video I had picked up on the way home from Mrs. Leaver's. *The Train*, with Burt Lancaster. I had looked forward to getting Cecilia to bed and popping the video into the recorder, then lying back and listening to the terse, witless, but perfectly functional dialogue characteristic of the classier Sixties films. I would lie there, feeling splen-

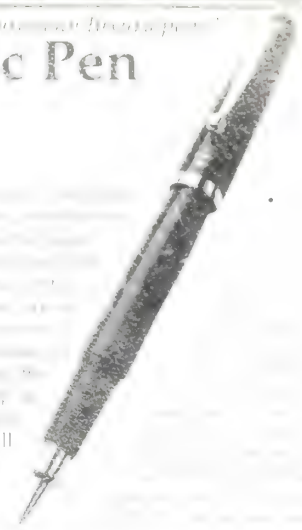
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[illegible] the action, and my [illegible] me after her [illegible] and lick me [illegible] the plot, then fall asleep before the final shootout. I'd cover her and fall asleep myself after rewinding the spool. Such evenings, fruitless but oddly satisfying, are the dark heart of any smoothly running [illegible]. The point is to remain unexcited, to run at a steady pace. This was the wisdom I had attained after years of trial and error. And here was my wife with the dinner and the wine, and I knew I might as well forget *The Train*.

When I brought this up, she gave me one of those looks you get in the middle of your dreary movies, which you watch only to avoid having to deal with me. She was quite certain she could see right through me, and I knew [illegible] no purpose to point out that what she was seeing was only the mirror of herself: what such behavior, if *she* were doing it, would certainly mean. We live in an age and time, I suppose, when it is virtually impossible to admit without shame that one might prefer the derring-do of Burt Lancaster to the white thighs and ruby lips of a wife. As I prepared Cecilia for bed, I began to dread the scene that awaited me. The [illegible] of the night before to tight [illegible] endured [illegible] now seemed not so benevolent to me, and the lifting of my penis [illegible] an act I had regarded as a mutual recognition and appreciation of irony [illegible] struck me as something quite different.

She was sitting at the kitchen counter when I came downstairs, and the dishes, my one remaining distraction, had all been stacked in the dishwasher. It remained only for me to add the lemon-scented powder and turn the thing on. Before her was a glass of red wine [illegible] a Spanish vintage, highly recommended by our local wine merchant [illegible] and the image of her struck me right away as a pose of mourning. It [illegible] that [illegible] had come home not to save her marriage but to end it.

I have no idea what my body was doing as it took in this possibility, but I do know that my mind began conducting one of those enormous image-rushes that have always signified to me the onset of panic. Suddenly a flood of images shot upward, most of them having to do with my old friends abandonment and betrayal, until one attained dominance: a vision of the economist Friedman, not as I had most recently imagined him, a diminished creature under a hot punishing shower, but hale, hearty, and well fed at his own dinner table, enjoying a final meal with his wife and two sons, harboring his secret and thinking, as he sopped up the last of the chicken in his wife's good garlic sauce, of the suitcase he would soon pack and the parking lot of the strip shopping center where he and my wife had no doubt planned, after the twin leave-takings, to meet. Off they would ride into the April evening, most likely to an off-campus motel notorious for its between-classes assignations, to spend a mildly sobering but nonetheless fulfilling evening of committed sex before rising to teach their morning classes.

My great desire at this point was to get out of the room. It was not so much the facts I was resistant to as the melodrama that seemed about to unfold. The garish and eye-popping mode of contemporary domestic warfare has never suited me. It seemed to me altogether better that I should pop into the next room while she composed a note outlining her intentions and estimated day and time of departure. I prefer the thing *written*, that's all, and ambiguity thereby skirted. If my wife, for instance, is about to say the words "I'm leaving," what will she *really* be saying? "Fight for me"? "Don't let me go"? There's no true way of knowing, you see, and in order to find out, I'd have to humiliate myself in one of those endless groveling scenes I detest. Whereas if the thing were written down, *typed* even, I'd have no choice but to accept it.

It would have been a mistake, though, to try and avoid the scene by preempting her and saying the words myself. I might have been wrong in my guess, though I didn't think I was, and any mention of the issue at all would have necessitated our Getting Into Things. Leave it covered until you are forced to uncover it, I say. Meanwhile, as I indulged in all these speculations, my wife had done nothing but take a single, maddeningly slow sip of win[illegible] Before the glass had been placed bac[illegible] in front of her, I announced that I ha[illegible] left the garden hose unraveled in th[illegible] side yard and used that [illegible] an excuse to get outside.

Ours is a small yard, located t[illegible] the side of the house, with just enoug[illegible] room for a few garden beds and a set [illegible] lawn chairs. On summer nights it [illegible] pleasant to sit outside and listen to th[illegible] crickets, looking up at the large hous[illegible] with that peculiar sense of pride ne[illegible] homeowners enjoy. The house is our s[illegible] lidity, the house and Cecilia asleep within it; all else is a transience to[illegible] horrendous to contemplate. In habi[illegible] such as this, I suppose I resemble m[illegible] contemporaries: having lost everythin[illegible] in the way of surety, we cling to hou[illegible] es and gardens with the sort of obse[illegible] siveness Deborah Kerr once captured [illegible] brilliantly when she used to play thos[illegible] fussy and straitlaced matrons who fri[illegible] tered about in gardens saying thing[illegible] like "Oh, dear! Oh, dear! The forsythia[illegible] are running amok!" until someone lik[illegible] Burt Lancaster comes along to lay h[illegible] and push her life into a more robu[illegible] phase. It often occurs to me that wha[illegible] we've become is a whole nation of Del[illegible] orahs fussing in the garden, waiting f[illegible] Burt. Who knows what form Burt wi[illegible] take when he comes? Global cataclysm[illegible] Religious redemption? It's none of m[illegible] business, really; I'll be either very old [illegible] gone, and it's Cecilia who'll live to fin[illegible] out. I mention this only because it wa[illegible] a particular comfort to consider on [illegible] night when one's wife waited insid[illegible] the house to end one's marriage. [illegible] looked up at the sky and remembere[illegible] reading once how the astronomer Jo[illegible] hannes Kepler thought he heard th[illegible] lyrics to the music of the spheres, th[illegible] grinding of the planets forcing out th[illegible] words "Miseria. Famine. Miseria." Bu[illegible] tonight the music of the spheres sounc[illegible] ed different to me. What I heard wa[illegible] "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" These will h[illegible] known someday as the years befor[illegible] Burt, I thought, and watched as th[illegible] pale face of the moon slipped out fro[illegible] behind its cover of clouds. How cold [illegible] looked. How sad to think of a ma[illegible] standing up on the moon, standing i[illegible] the middle of a life like mine, starin[illegible] across the vastness of space at anothe[illegible] planet, one assumed empty. Then th[illegible]

nge disappeared as I recalled that we d been there, we had confirmed the ptness. We are now quite certain at no one lives on the moon.

There was a sound from within the use. I turned to see my wife, through e window, washing her wineglass in e sink. Evidently, she'd given up iting for me. This was not to say at I was off the hook. The monster d submerged, that was all. Mean hile, my mind, as if obeying some erverse will of its own, had fallen in- a kind of reverie, superimposing the nage of Mrs. Leaver on the woman at ne sink. Immediately, I saw it was no ood. I am not fool enough to believe hat you can put one thing where an- ther belongs and escape that way. My ife was drying her hands. She put her ngs—removed for the dish washing— ack on, looked out the window once —I knew she wouldn't see me in the arkness—and headed upstairs.

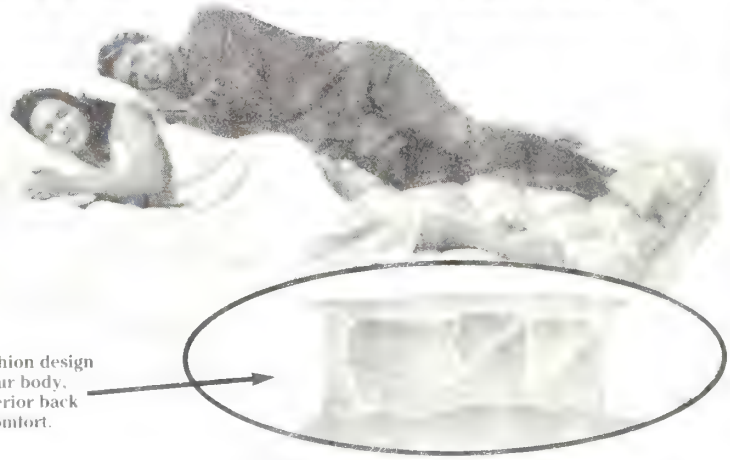
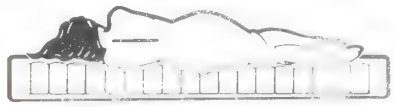
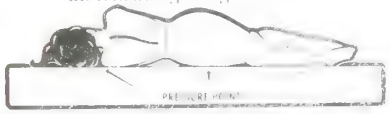
I went and sat on one of the lawn hairs. They are sturdy chairs, a crafts- nan's chairs, though we bought them heaply enough, unfinished, sanded nd painted them ourselves. This, gain, in the days before Cecilia. We were quite the couple then, quite the loers-of-things-together, and, gather- ng this information, you will no doubt nark the birth of our child as the end of our romance. That would be the conventional view; it is, I am sure, my wife's view. But as I sat there in the cold chair pondering the end of things, it was not the death of romance that was on my mind; rather, it was the curious happiness I had achieved with Cecilia, a happiness I now saw threatened. For some of us, the presence of a woman is not enough to convince us we're not alone. Only a child can do that. And once it happens, all other relations change. There is nothing cruel or deliberate about this; it is simply what happens, simply what is.

I looked at the house then and knew what it was I had to do. It is at such moments that I always wish I smoked cigars, even cigarettes, or drank strong whiskey. There is something pleasing, manly even, in reaching a decision but retaining the presence of mind to finish the smoke or drink in your hand before feeling compelled to act. It attests to the balance of things. But I have none of these vices; there was nothing

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[illegible] from the bathroom window faces the back of the house; from where I was sitting in the side yard, all I could see [illegible] was the blank wall behind our bedroom, the sloping roof, and the eaves. It was up to me to imagine the scene [illegible] without even the helpful sound effects. My wife, who ten minutes ago had left the kitchen, must by then have removed her dress and slipped into a nightgown. There was the ritual of the face cleaning, then the teeth. But I needed only get up. I needed only enter the house. It didn't matter where I found her, really. It would all be the same.

There were first, though, the things a careful husband does before turning in: checking the burners on the gas stove and the pilot lights, plugging in the coffee maker, turning down the [illegible] and the lights are out. Then upstairs, quiet against the carpet. My wife was already in bed, asleep, a surprise.

In the bathroom, I undressed. I am either vain or only normally vain, depending on your view of such matters; I give vanity no thought at all, but I do [illegible] before turning in. Just as the pilot lights are checked to make sure they're still [illegible] the tummy I developed in motherhood, and the puffiness around the shoulders and breasts that may be the seat of highest vulnerability in the [illegible] men [illegible] seem to want to act like women, we fear turning into them. We do not want breasts; at least, *I* do not. I don't generally pay much attention to my genitals, but tonight I studied them, gazed upon them like a pile of old schoolbooks I'd just come upon and knew a desire to flip through. They had done their part, like the schoolbooks. One held on to them for nostalgic purposes, and it occurred to me as I regarded them how deeply nostalgia rules our lives after a point, nearly every act a beckoning after an earlier, somehow purer act. What I was about to do was merely a recognition of this truth. Nature sees fit to leave us with our genitals even after they have served their function, so we are more or less compelled, for good or ill, to arrange [illegible] have come. Perhaps, it occurred to me as I caught the last ghostly image of myself in the fading of the switched-off light, it is as far as we are capable of going. At least, until Burt comes. Whatever Burt turns out to be.

In bed, I immediately lowered myself to my wife's center. Another nostalgic act, and one I harbored little doubt about. Sex is not difficult even in the worst of times. Certain scents carry on them the film of one's life. In the days when I engaged in this sort of thing regularly, it always seemed to me that, in entering my wife, what I was in fact doing was sitting down in a darkened movie theater and letting the images roll past me, as if it is in sex, not death, that all the important events flash before one's eyes. I don't know if my wife was surprised enough to object when I began to penetrate her; her hands grasped my shoulders, in shock or pleasure I'll never know. The lights were out. She quickly achieved the high moaning that, for me, contained her former presence as acutely as the handwriting on her earliest letters. The difficulty, if there was one, is that studying her early jottings, or her picture in the high school yearbook, pleasant as these things might be, is not the same thing as appreciating her presence *now*. So lovemaking had this air for me of a secondary activity, a scratching after the past, a forcible dreaming in which real-life, present-tense activity offered too painful an alternative. Yet in this way, and only in this way, I knew I would win her back. She would accept the shadow for the act; the false activity was for her, as for most others, the real. No one is really interested in evolution, or not many. Already, I could feel the onset of the great thwacking orgasm I could always summon from her, loud and deep, a thrumming bass note. And then, always, predictably, her hands would cradle my buttocks, so as to hurry me on, that I might join her in these depths of pleasure, and as I made the first sounds of my own approaching orgasm, her breath became deep and solemn, as if there were something terribly serious about a man letting loose a jet of sperm. All of this happened as it had happened in the months and years before, as if we were a pair of old troupers fallen on hard times who had agreed to repeat one of their past successes. Perhaps we would have appeared to any spectator like a pair of ghostly figures on the bed. Or perhaps anyone watching would have thought the scene only right and just: two fine bodies at work, in tune with each other. It was perfect sex, really, the kind we all aspire to. And I am just smart enough to admit that about all the important matters I may be dead wrong. Perhaps this was precisely what we ought to have been doing, and no more.

Afterward, my wife cradled close to me, affectionately. I trust there is not an excess of vanity in the fact that for me, at that moment, there was no question as to the defeat of the economist Friedman. I was aware of him fading, of the light closing around us and on this image of domestic restoration. Not for nothing do we respond as we do to the fifth acts of Shakespeare's romances. No one, even in this unlikely age, is fond of divorce. The notion persists that certain people belong together, and I am content to believe this is so for us. I waited until she was asleep and then went into Cecilia's room.

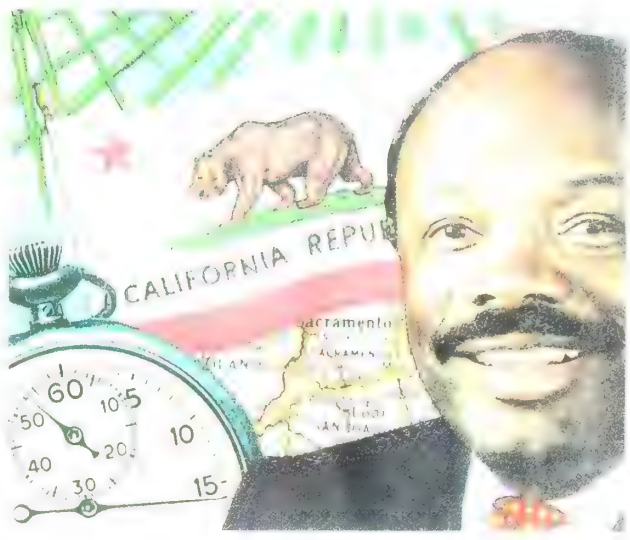
There is not a lot there. We are neither of us much for the sorts of painted-ceilinged wonderlands you see in the movies when the filmmakers want very badly to let you know how devoted the young parents are. Most babies live in rooms like prisons and gaze out at the world through the bars of a crib. None of this is accidental. Life, in fact, is extraordinarily blank: rooms have walls and floors, that's all, Cecilia, and this is where we live, here between these walls and floors, in these rooms, and with luck, we can keep them blank, keep away the terrible scenes and fights that require us, in reaction, to pin up pleasant scenes and vistas that are all of a piece with falseness. None of this, of course, will I ever tell her. Instead, I will pat her small tender head and invent stories and tales like any other father. Only in silence will I offer the enormous thanks that is due her. This little room is my chalice, my cathedral; of course, I'm not telling you anything new in admitting to this. I will do what I can to preserve it. I will do what I must to retain my happiness.

THE LAME-DUCK STATE

Term limits, Willie Brown and the hobbling of California government

By Douglas Foster

Behind the electronically controlled door to his former office in the state capitol, Willie Lewis Brown Jr. crouched low in his executive's chair, fidgeting with a wad of telephone messages. Brown's secretary had written his phone messages in extra-large print on low-glare yellow paper because he has retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative eye disease that he's suffered in secret for years. A collection of African art was on display to his right, and an oversize computer screen partly blocked the view of sloping, lush green grass through the window to his left.



As Speaker of the California Assembly, Brown is one of the most powerful politicians in the country. But he is also marked for extinction. Three years ago, California voters, enraged by economic recession and political corruption, focused on Brown and his Sacramento cronies as the cause of their pain and passed a radical term-limits measure. After one more session, the man who once referred to himself as the "Ayatollah" of the legislature and has boasted that his only political ambition was to be Speaker for Life will be pushed out of the institution he's served for more than thirty years—along with the entire legislative leadership.

I spent a few weeks in Sacramento at the end of the 1993 legislative term, talking to Brown and observing the effects of term limits on one state government. Term limits are a fad these days, and in some form or another have been imposed on some fifteen state legislatures, [illegible] campaigns to impose them exist in seven more states.

During the time I watched him, Brown went purposefully about the business of adding to his legacy, as if to show the voters just who it was they had cast off. But there was evidence of a fraying temper, as I noticed when Phil Sch[illegible] and Richard [illegible], two powerful lobbyists for California-based insurance companies, stopped by [illegible] to talk Brown into changing a piece of workers'-compensation-reform legislation that Brown considered [illegible] anyway: insurance companies [illegible] at a disadvantage in relation [illegible] by "an ambiguity" in the law.

"Look, the legislation was designed to get the consumer the best possible deal," said Brown, moving toward [illegible] telling you now not to fuck around with workers' compensation. That's what I'm telling you! Don't fuck with me on it!" he barked.

After the two lobbyists had departed, Brown said, "You know, there are no term limits for lobbyists."

Sacramento, set gleaming on a dry, brown wedge of floodplain where the Sacramento and American rivers conjoin, was the fourth choice for California's capital. [illegible]

Douglas Foster is a John S. Knight Fellow at Stanford University and the former editor of Mother Jones magazine.

Illustration by Victor Juhasz

marily a farming town, but it now is ing with bureaucrats and lobbyists. For Willie Brown.

An up-by-the-bootstraps migrant door deal with Republicans. Second governor, Speaker Brown has a hand in omy in the world, wisecracks and bold poses. It played well when he was a maverick, speaking up for the undering the prolonged, painful decline of California's economy and highly publicized corruption probes that reached into Brown's circle.

economic panic. The unemployment rate is the highest among industrial California; one in five disappeared from Los Angeles County alone. So, spurred on by an organization led by natural thing—they blamed their elected representatives.

sition 140. "If Willie Brown had not been Speaker in 1990, term limits would not have passed," Jim Brulte, the lumbering Republican Assembly leader, told me shortly after I watched him conferring amiably with Brown on the Assembly floor. "Willie Brown is a very, very visible, colorful, and passion people. Because he is so

his suit pocket and then I lame him."

If you say "term limits" in his presence, even softly, you get the Speaker's full attention. "Terrible! Terrible! Terrible!" Brown said during one of our first interviews, shrugging his shoulders in rhythm with the exclamation points. "God-awful!" Brown's is the standard anti–term limits litany: term limits are undemocratic because they force individual voters in particular districts to change representation when they ought to have the right to re-elect incumbents unto death (as they often do); and term limits shift power from the people's representatives to the governor as well as lobbyists, who never have to stand for election.

> PARTICIPATING IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS IS NO LONGER A CAREER OPTION. IT IS SIMPLY A TEMPORARY WAY STATION."

"I still can't believe it happened here," Brown said, the gnomelike grin long gone. "Participating in the electoral process is no longer a career option. It is simply a temporary way station, to be occupied by either those who are marginal or those who are extremely wealthy and idle."

Brown's dour prediction could be sloughed off as the self-serving bleat of an expiring politician. He's a dealmaker, a power broker, a convener of interests—in short, the living definition of the career politician so thoroughly out of favor with the public these days. By passing the measure, the legislature has temporarily appeased the public's anger. But California voters not only vanquished Willie Brown; they also did away with his office, devaluing the legislature as a whole and ensuring that no other Speaker of his stature will emerge again. And it is by no means clear that this is a positive development.

Elsewhere in Sacramento I found the mood more somber, if anything, than it was in Brown's office. "The word around here is 'terminals.' That's what we're called," Senator Barbara gambled over breakfast early one morning. We had met in a sleepy café a few blocks from the capitol so that Hart, an archetypal good-government type and a member of the legislature for twenty years, could get to a committee meeting on time. Hart, a tall man who looks like the Hollywood stereotype of a politician, seemed tired, discomfited. He picked at his pancakes. "'Terminal,'" he repeated, narrowing his eyes. "That's a very harsh word. People don't want to be known as *terminals*, as you can imagine. It's a sign of political impotence."

Even term-limit supporters are finding the legislature inhospitable. In fact the measure's most vocal advocate, a scrub-faced Republican from Stockton named Dean Andal, is leaving the legislature before he's forced out. Andal is a likable former Eagle Scout, a Reaganite supply-sider whose surprise election in a Democratic district often put him at odds with Willie Brown. One afternoon during a break between sessions, Andal leaned away from the desk in his cramped office, fingered his square-framed eyeglasses, and mused about the long-range effects of term limits. An autographed photo of George Bush was mounted on the wall to his left. "I liked him," Andal said, "but I sure was disappointing." Term limits will benefit his party, he said, because businesspeople who want a brief break from their careers will be more likely to run for office than wonks who see public policy as a career in itself. (Those people tend to be teachers, social workers, union members, and lawyers—and disproportionately Democrats.)

"It doesn't take someone experienced in government or even experienced in politics to vote against government spending." Andal tapped his desk with an index finger. "Is chaos really bad in a legislature? Lobbyists love order because it's predictable; they can manipulate it any way they want. The press likes order because they're lazy; they don't want to work too hard. Politicians like order because they know how they can survive easily. But for the average voter out there, for the average guy, is chaos bad?"

The California legislature assumed its current form a generation ago, under the legendary speaker Jesse "Big Daddy" Unruh. Presiding over the legislature at a time when the state's growth and prosperity seemed limitless, Unruh had a vision of good government—and, not incidentally,

n of solidifying his power base
ough professionalization of the leg
ure. For the first time, salaries were
ised enough so that members and
ir staffs might work at their jobs
time. In the 1960's, the legislature
erged as an equal branch of gov
nment, staffed with professionals and
lebrated nationally as a model state
itution.

Brown expanded on Unruh's vision
ring his tenure, the Assembly's an
al operating expenses grew to near
$100 million. The amounts of mon
raised by political candidates in Cal
rnia grew geometrically as well, and
llie Brown was in the center of the
ction, raising millions of dollars each
ar to spread around among Demo
tic candidates.

Currently, eleven committees are
gistered with the secretary of state
raise funds for Brown, their filings
cked with large reported contribu
ns from tobacco companies, oil firms,
al lawyers, and state employees,
nor other special interests, are an in
x of the Speaker's power. But when
pular fury over the sway of big mon
in conventional politics intensified,
own offered an inviting target.

A series of federal investigations of
rruption in Sacramento had stoked
e public's mistrust. The probes led to
e convictions of nine legislators,
gislative aides, and lobbyists, in
uding a guilty verdict for the state's
ost important influence peddler. Last
ecember. Several of Willie Brown's
lies were among the guilty. Last sum
er one of Brown's friends, Mark
athanson, a real estate broker from
everly Hills whom Brown had ap
inted twice to the state Coastal
ommission, admitted he'd used his
sition "as a racketeering enterprise."
was widely assumed that the chief
rget of the federal probes was Willie
rown himself. (In the midst of a much
rlier phase of the investigations,
rown told me, agents had stuffed
,000 in cash under the door of the
me of one of his aides. The money
s returned.) Though Brown was not
charged with a crime, rumors circu
ted that he was the real target of the
deral investigations, and he was un
le to avoid the taint of impropriety.
"The mood is real simple," Proposi
on 140 co-author Pete Schabarum

You deserve a factual

Judea/Sam[illegible]a (the "West Bank")
Can Isr[illegible] survive without it?

[illegible] it in the be[illegible]

What are the fact[illegible]

The Root of the Conflict.

[illegible] timians. It is about Israel's very exist[illegible]
The PLO [illegible]

Would the "West Bank" be demilitarized

by Israel and then using that state to foment a final allied Arab assault against the truncated Jewish state.

The Importance of Territory. [illegible] believe that in the age of missiles, territory is of little importance. But this is not the case. The Arab states have acquired over $50 billion of the most advanced armaments since the end of the Gulf War. And those are not just "conventional" weapons. [illegible] enormous quantities of [illegible] and much more. The Arab states possess large arsenals of chemical and biological weapons, and all of them work feverishly on the development of their nuclear potential. All of those weapons have only one single target and one single purpose: the destruction of the state of Israel. And that goal is not being cancelled for any agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

> "Without [illegible] Israel would be totally indefensible; therefore, neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the 'West Bank'."

For both "conventional" war and total war of mass destruction, territory and topography are critical for self-defense and deterrence. The mountainous territory of Judea Samaria (the "West Bank") is [illegible] trained soldiers camouflaged as their police [illegible] highly doubtful that the surrounding, hostile Arab nations [illegible] And finally, [illegible] Palestinian Arab terror organizations that [illegible] an authority can control. There would be a constant rain of Katyusha rocket launched [illegible] population and of its industrial and military [illegible] ing and outgoing flight would be subject to [illegible] not exploit that irresistible oppo[illegible]

Without the West Bank [illegible] over 100 U.S. generals and admirals, Israel's strong defensive posture makes it most unadvisable for Israel's enemies to attack her. But once this defensive strength is removed, a coordinated war against Israel can only be a matter of time. The example and fate of Czechoslovakia, which preparatory to the Second World War was dismantled and shorn of its defensive capacity, insistently come to mind. What does all this [illegible] an to the United States? In a part of the world in which our country has the most far-reaching geopolitical stakes, Israel is the guarantor of American interests in the area. With Israel in a position of weakness the role of the United States in the area would [illegible] such as Syria, Iraq and Iran would dominate. That is why, despite the heady prospect of "peace in our time", neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by [illegible]

FLAME
Facts and Logic about the Middle
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told the *Los Angeles Times* in 1990, "and that's [the folks] we're really ticked

state's supporters promised, would be

term. Proposition 140 limited legislators

shopping, or second bite of the apple,

measure also contained provisions that seemed deliberately punitive. Under the initiative, the budget for legislative staff was cut by 40 percent; pen-

and Brown added to was being systematically dismantled.

regular haunts, the Speaker sipped a good Merlot and speculated, un-

term limits campaign in 1990. His

pegged. Brown said, on a pledge to put an additional $300,000 into the campaign to defeat Proposition 140. (Roberti denies having made such a promise.) The money was to have been used to send a letter to conservative voters revealing former president Ronald Reagan's opposition to the measure. Brown felt certain that the anti–term limits Reagan letter would have turned the trick. Californians passed Proposition 140, after all, by a narrow margin of 52 percent. "Ours was a good campaign," Brown said. "It was a boutique campaign, narrowly aimed at niches of voters. The Rea-

piece. We would have gotten the con-

Speaker said.

Even as a lame duck, Brown still

mer and tall, an anti-immigrant fever, redolent of a similar hysteria in Europe and an early warning of the xenophobia that would sweep the rest of the country, suddenly hit California. Republican governor Pete Wilson swiftly resurrected himself from the ranks of the politically moribund by proposing that the children of illegal immigrants be prevented from attending public schools. Even California's two liberal U.S. senators, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, weighed in with proposals for stricter enforcement of immigration laws. Republican legislators had begun sending mail into Democratic districts, accusing them of softness in the face of an immigration

> NOW, ABSOLVED OF RESPONSIBILITY, LEGISLATORS WILL WAIT, EARS PERKED, SERVILE, UNTIL THE PEOPLE CAN BE CONSULTED

So one afternoon Brown convened a meeting of top legbehind closed doors in a stately conference room that adjoins his office. He'd carefully balanced the group. Liberals such as John Burton of San Francisco and Richard Polanco of Los Angeles, from the Latino Caucus, were in attendance around the polished oval table, and so were more conservative members of the legislature, such as Deirdre Alpert of Coronado and Thomas Hannigan of rural Fairfield. "Right now," said Brown to the group, "if you wanted to open a concentration camp, some would say, 'Okay, let's put them all away.'"

Burton, a former congressman known for his edgy impatience, expressed frustration with the course of the public debate. All the proposals from the governor, and several bills already introduced in the Senate, were, and scapegoating of the basest kind. "All this stuff is bullshit!" he protested. But Alpert firmly differed. "Some of us are going to have to vote for some

An hour later the group had agreed on a package of bills that Polanco and sible for creating. Those bills would nibble around the edges of the immigrant issue. The legislature would put

heat on the federal government to crack down at the border and to deport illegal immigrants convicted of crimes back to Mexico to serve their sentences. These would be tools, Brown implied, with which to beat off more poisonous possibilities.

By early the next morning, at a meeting of the Speaker's staff, the decision was closed: Brown would help protect his constituents, the forty-six other Democratic members of the Assembly, from political damage on the immigration issue. His staff would provide research, help organize town meetings and brief members about the legislative initiatives agreed to [illegible] before. "We need to relieve some pressure in this very hot pressure cooker," Brown told his staff. "Right now, it is as though our members are driving a bus full of illegals across the border. We've got to get the member out of there. Somebody else needs to be put in there as the driver. The member has to become at least the traffic cop—making sure the driver is following all the appropriate laws."

Brown also probed for ideas about how to transform his defensive posture into something more aggressive. A few minutes after the staff meeting ended, Brown tried out one notion on the media: first in a session with broadcast executives and later at a press conference with capitol reporters, Brown announced, with only the hint of a grin, that employers of illegal immigrants should be put on the hook for creating the immigration problem. Individuals and companies employing illegal immigrants should be treated no differently from drug dealers, the Speaker said. Asset forfeiture—in which the property of malefactors is seized—ought to be imposed on such employers.

One of the state's best-known employers, the Walt Disney Co., had been suspected of hiring illegal immigrants, Brown noted. "If you had asset forfeiture, the federal government would now be operating the Matterhorn. Farms and factories could be taken

under a new asset forfeiture law
the legislature might pass. Per-
s the feds could even seize a few
its. "You know, I've always want-
o have a boat," Brown said. The
ublicans had been warned the
migration issue could be made to
merang, hurting them as well as
nocrats.

he kind of reflexive, moderating
uence Brown brought to bear in the
migration debate was once consid-
d an integral part of a political lead-
calling. But Brown's intervention
s also precisely the kind of interfer-
e—some might call it gridlock
t term-limits supporters intended to
hinate. The term-limits measure was
igned to create a system in which
ort-loop responsiveness becomes the
ghest political virtue. With power
w flowing from state government's
st representative body, one can guess
o might replace elected legislative
leaders as California's chief
mediating influences.

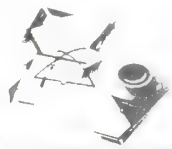
unch at Frank Fats is a pream-
to legislation. In operation since
39, the restaurant is known as the
hird House." Representatives of the
ople and agents of special interests
op past the sleek bar made of black
anite, beneath an eighteenth-cen-
ry Peking Opera tapestry hung in a
ncrete frame. VIPs pass through the
en dining room and into the power
rridor—a series of semicircular, mul-
colored cloth-covered benches facing
f across a narrow aisle. From a perch
one of those sought-after benches,
bbyists can eat the best moo-shu
rk in town while keeping track of
e another's business.

One afternoon I heard a lobbyist
m the California Manufacturers As-
ciation, a former legislator, regaling
veral senators with a misogynist joke
one table while nearby, over beet
d broccoli, a man who operates a
xic-waste dump in northern Califor-
a was getting advice about how to
at back the regulators and keep his
siness open a while longer. Within
rshot, a lobbyist who represents the
xic dumper's competitors plotted strat-
y and picked at his grilled salmon.

Greenhorn legislators have always
rned their trade at Frank Fats, but
term limits begin to take effect, the

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institutional memory will tend to migrate even more from the statehouse to the restaurant [illegible] writing more speeches for members, and even drafting legislation themselves. Increasingly, they are referred to openly as "spectators" at new laws.

In his regular booth at Frank Fat's at lunchtime (and in an interview later in his high-rise office), superlobbyist George Steffes — one of the most powerful lobbyists in Sacramento, first traded friendly insults with the chef and then mulled over the effects of term limitations. He brushed back his gray hair, looking like a mature version of Jimmy Stewart in Mr. *South Goes to Washington*. When I put to Steffes the notion that lobbyists were "licking their chops" or "salivating" over the effects of term limits, as two legislators had suggested to me, he lost some of his courtly sheen. "I think I voted against term limits in the end," Steffes said, nodding his head for emphasis, as if he feared being disbelieved. "I certainly didn't vote that way, or consider voting the other way, because I thought I was going to lose power and it was going to hurt my job."

Steffes had been the legislative liaison during Ronald Reagan's first term as governor of California in the early 1970s. After leaving the governor's office, he formed the capital's first political lobbying firm. Steffes's company is a powerhouse, representing blue-chip oil and finance and insurance clients, as well as employing scores of people, including eight full-time lobbyists. One of Steffes's more recent hires was William Rutland, Willie Brown's closest friend. His business is a permanent fixture now in Sacramento. Its strength —and the influence of other lobbyists—hasn't changed a jot since term limits went into effect.

As legislative leaders depart and members flow through a rapid revolving door (many to become lobbyists themselves), the effort to influence legislation is being shifted from Sacramento out into individual districts. Decentralized lobbying—in which constituents are mobilized at the grassroots level—is already more common. "Phone mail, personal contact, public-relations programs at the grass roots—that's what we'll see in the future," Steffes said. This kind of lobbying, of course, is more difficult for the press and the public to follow. At le in Brown's case, corporate donors a on file for all to see. The new forms lobbying are harder to trace, and ther fore more effective. Instead of spen ing to bring corporate executives Sacramento, lobbyists increasingly r ly on mid-level managers or worke and their families in the battle for le islators' hearts and minds.

"My philosophy about all this 'Hey, don't ask me about the rule Make the rules. And I'll win,' " Steff said. " 'Whatever your rules are, I'm g ing to win.' "

Still, I was curious that several of er lobbyists I met—in their offices, the hallways of the capitol, in hea ing rooms—didn't seem especially e thusiastic about the opportunity they been handed by term-limits refor At a fund-raiser for one assemblyma I cornered a top lobbyist for insuran companies and pressed him, over t drunken din, to explain why. The lo byist gripped my forearm and steadi himself. "You won't believe it, but he it is anyway," he said, looking mo sober by the minute. "The fact is, I r alize that my clients are not alwa right. With a strong legislature, there a balance of forces. You make your a gument, fight for your client's pos tion, and you have a chance to preva if you've also got a case on the merit But nobody can get everything th want. And nobody *should* get ever thing they want. Sometimes, yo know, your client doesn deserve to win."

As I followed the California le islature through the end of its 199 session, talking to members, leade staff, activists, and lobbyists, it o curred to me that the hottest debat in Sacramento were over tortured a tempts by legislators to limit then selves. Perhaps this was the cleare sign that Proposition 140 had served purpose. Representatives were relu tant to exercise power of any kind. B the close of the session, the Assemb had even imposed on all its membe a limit for bills introduced—a max mum of fifty per member during eac two-year session.

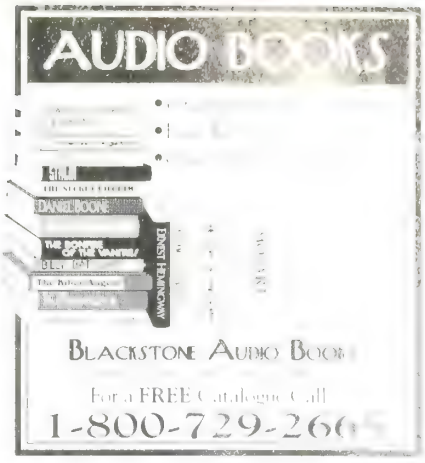
Discussion on the floor consiste mostly of sniping: Assemblyman Cu tis Tucker of Inglewood complaine

there were several of his colleagues
never had my *ideas* and there
would never generate any mean-
ul legislation. Why should con-
ntious lawmakers like himself be
ished by an artificial ceiling, espe-
ly since his time in Sacramento
already foreshortened by term lim-
The question was drowned out in
orus of aye votes.

ust a few weeks earlier, the Assem-
had taken nearly an hour to de-
e a proposal by the body's senior
publican, Stan Statham. Statham's
bbyhorse is an effort to split Cali-
nia into thirds. (Statham points out
at the twenty-two least populous
es hold 31 million people—equal
the population of California—and
at results in a gross inequality. One
oup of 31 million people is repre-
ated by forty-four senators. "We've
t two, and we're supposed to be the
boys and girls?") For years Statham
d worked the issue, always a hot
ket on talk radio, but it had never
fore moved forward legislatively.

The debate about cutting California
wn to size was stunning. "Free the
orth!" shouted one assemblyman. An-
her quoted Jefferson, but he was
umped by a colleague invoking Moses:
et our people go!" Problems swiftly
nerged: Trice Harvey of Bakersfield
sed the idea of splitting the state, so
ng as his rural folks wouldn't have to
e lumped in a state of Central Cali-
rnia along with those weird San Fran-
scans. Steve Peace of Chula Vista
idn't want to live in a new state dom-
nated by Los Angeles. And Louis
aldera of Los Angeles said somberly
hat the prospect of splitting California
ould bump into the reductio ad ab-
rdum of Balkanization. "We are not
he Soviet Union! We are not Yu-
oslavia!" he shouted.

The exercise seemed to be the open-
ng act of a new style in governing Cal-
ornia, a burlesque of deliberation that
bound to get cruder as term limits
ake their full effect. The peculiar form
f Statham's proposal was emblematic.
fter all, he wasn't asking the Assem-
ly to use its power to split the state. He
nly wanted the legislature to *authorize*
eferendum—so that the voters might
eigh in. It was the ultimate, cautious
hort loop. Legislators had abdicated
he power they'd had, and with it their



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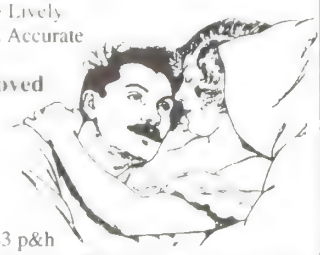
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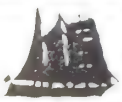
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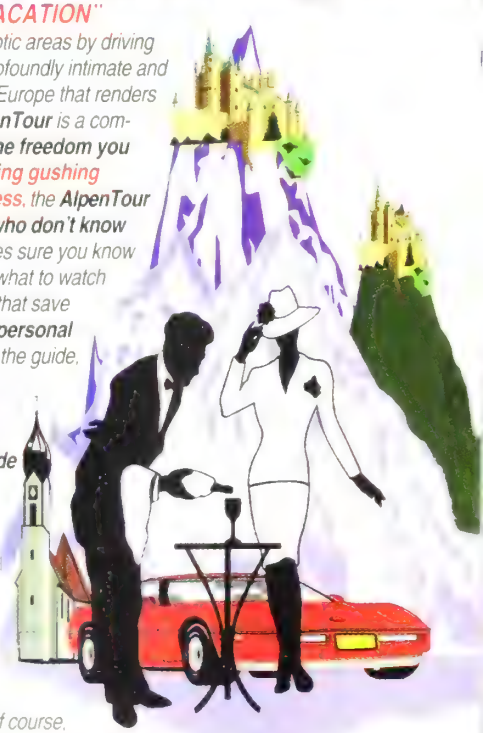
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nished his colleagues. "And what an some power that is. . . . You really can t your constituents to make the right decision. After all, they elected you, didn't they?"

The distinction between power l position was much on Speaker own's mind as his own ability to pe events began to wither. Brown nself, naturally, was loath to admit losing his grip. The Speaker told that he'd "seen no sign" of dimined authority. But challenges to his ice, however minor, sent him into es, at allies and enemies alike. One rning in a sudden burst of temper, own pitilessly dressed down top ex itives of the University of Califor- because a researcher at U.C. San ancisco had written a report that own didn't like about the political luence of tobacco companies. The iversity officials had come to see m on an unrelated matter, but the eaker used the opportunity to launch s attack anyway. "You're going to ve trouble with me on *every* single propriation!" Brown said, jabbing index finger. "If that guy gets one ore cent of state money, you'll have ouble with me!"

On my last day in Sacramento this st fall, I stopped by Willie Brown's fice to say good-bye. I looked in, xpecting to see the Speaker on the lephone or in a huddle. His chair as empty. In the darkened room, ere was only one source of light, lsating from the screen of his com- ter. Brown had evidently left in a rry, because the oversize monitor d been left on. The screen, with e light pulsating behind, showed a ck of cards turned down and three rds face up—a deuce, a three, and joker. The Speaker had apparently shed off to a meeting after begin- ng a computer card game. He'd en playing solitaire.

Two months later I checked in by lephone. The Speaker's spirits were proved. He'd been negotiating a new g—as a television chat-show host on e number-one station in Sacramen- "He's really excited about it," own's press secretary reported. "It's mething where he can utilize all his ills." The Willie Brown show was heduled to air this winter. ■

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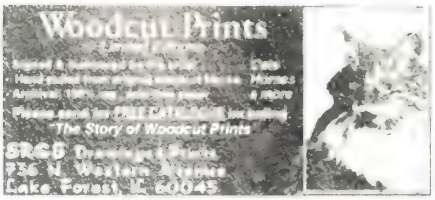
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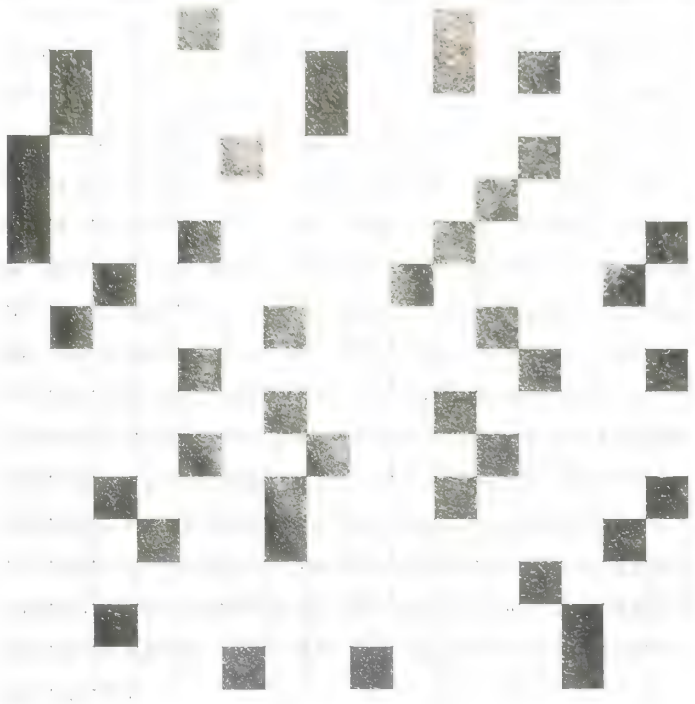
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DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 134

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The [illegible] form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the [illegible] of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 71.



CLUES — WORDS

A. Scraps, shreds — 110 172 [illegible] 142 [illegible]

B. 1906 song by Alfred H. Miles and Charles N. Zimmerman (2 wds.) — 11 [illegible] 146 [illegible] 50 [illegible]

C. Undertaking, embassy; legation — [illegible]

D. Displaying a rainbow-like array of lustrous colors — 15 [illegible] 45 [illegible] 75 [illegible]

E. Dingbats — 64 [illegible] 114 [illegible]

F. Wartime act of Congress passed in 1941 (hyph.) — 189 76 [illegible]

G. Harmonious movement or proportion — 90 193 157 176 [illegible]

H. Place of extreme delight — 9 150 [illegible] 175 [illegible]

I. Cleave; stick — 4 [illegible]

J. Leaves; splits; deteriorates — 4 [illegible] 39 60 [illegible]

K. Low, fast fly ball — 98 38 63 [illegible] 134

L. Problem, question, copy, edition — 211 [illegible] 155 [illegible] 104

M. Deliberate displays of distespect — 148 74 18 177 62 [illegible]

N. Viscous secretion, as of an animal or vegetable — [illegible] 19 61 94 143

O. Imperiling basic beliefs, attitudes, etc. — 36 47 209 181 32 [illegible] 68 [illegible]

[illegible] 132 205 144 116

P. [illegible] people [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Q. [illegible] subvert

R. [illegible] 174 17 [illegible] 21 24

S. W[illegible] [illegible] evs, e.g.

T. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 166 46

U. [illegible] [illegible] 112 51

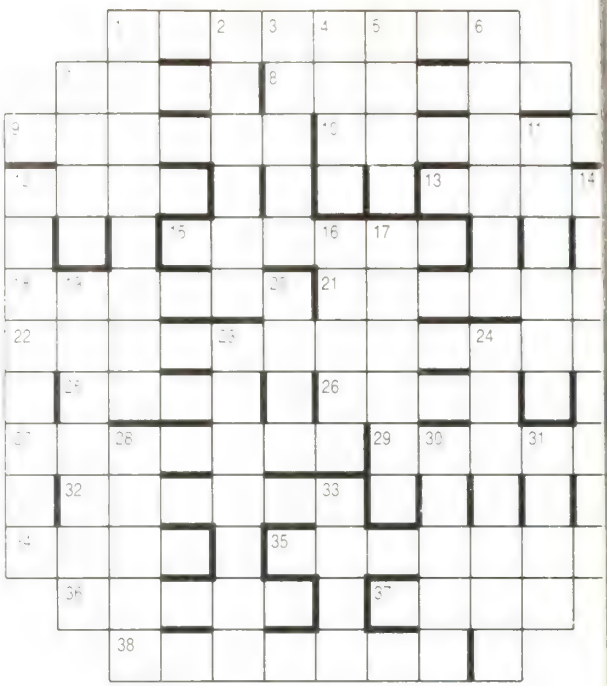
V. [illegible] [illegible] shall [illegible] me?

[illegible] 44 96 99 15

PUZZLE

Grillwork

by [illegible]



Each clue answer is one letter longer than its numbered space in the diagram. The added letters, read in order, spell out a quotation that the remainder will fit. Further instructions appear at 22A. Write the deleted letters in the spaces provided at the clue numbers; they will spell out a quotation from Publilius Syrus (42 B.C.).

[illegible] answers to [illegible] words (20A, 35A, 2D), a variant spelling (19D), and four proper names. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on [illegible]

Across

___ 1. I could write sad stories, filled with B.S.! (9, *two words*)
___ 7. Film chase beginning on turnpike (5)
___ 8. Gave an excuse for bailout that is depositor-[illegible]
___ 9. Small mammals cooked in soup—most without tail (7)
___ 10. Marshal Earp's out of bounds where he rides (7)
___ 12. He returned from Orient with stuff! (5)
___ 13. Rave after $1,000 reward (5)
___ 15. Swordsmen loudly chewed most of scenery (7)
___ 18. Panics about five runners for the Bureau (7)
___ 21. The German, upset by studies, shows embarrass-[illegible]
___ 25. Baronet deprived of degree over character (5)
___ 26. Hornless pack animal? Yes (5)
___ 27. This is old stuff, being involved in a quest (8)
___ 29. Heroin and this is pernicious. It's as much as one [illegible]
___ 32. Noblewoman—she's a looker, apparently (7)
___ 34. Workers for the Lord returned some religious tres-[illegible]
___ 35. Statistical divisor is not quite nil . . . but could [illegible]
___ 36. Make the sweater over and sloppily repair back (6)
___ 37. The painter's paste goes bad—there's sulfur in it (5)
___ 38. A good doctor sensed that old feeling (8)

Down

___ 1. Dessert: cooked artichokes. I left (9)
___ 2. Dessert B is passed around—that hurts (7)
___ 3. Boat capsized—master's getting criticism (6)
___ 4. Santa's almost finished covering long list (5)
___ 5. Once dressed with jade, in the past (5)
___ 6. Bum to split without hearing (7, *two words*)
___ 7. Comes across . . . and suddenly breaks up (5)
___ 11. Badger turned over devices to catch fish and seabirds (7)
___ 12. *Star* and *Times* misrepresented abuses (9)
___ 14. Number I'll have arranged about second home of country music (9)
___ 16. Sweet liqueurs Chinese merchant back-orders? (6)
___ 17. Rebuff seal fur after tailoring (7)
___ 19. One taking the kitty can taper off (8)
___ 20. Polish leader, originally European (5)
___ 23. Traveling route in a French region (8)
___ 24. If it's men to be teased, she's on the side of [illegible]
___ 28. Saintly mother's Easter conversion (6)
___ 30. Gets fresh again, as we're mixed up with Poles (6)
___ 31. Fabricated disguise as elf (5)
___ 33. [illegible] is American uplifted (5)

Contest Rules [illegible] New York, N.Y. 10022. [illegible] Doctor in the House" are Janet E. Stovel, Toronto, Canada; Bill Hood, Morehead City, North Carolina; and Jean W. Cozier, Chicago, Illinois.

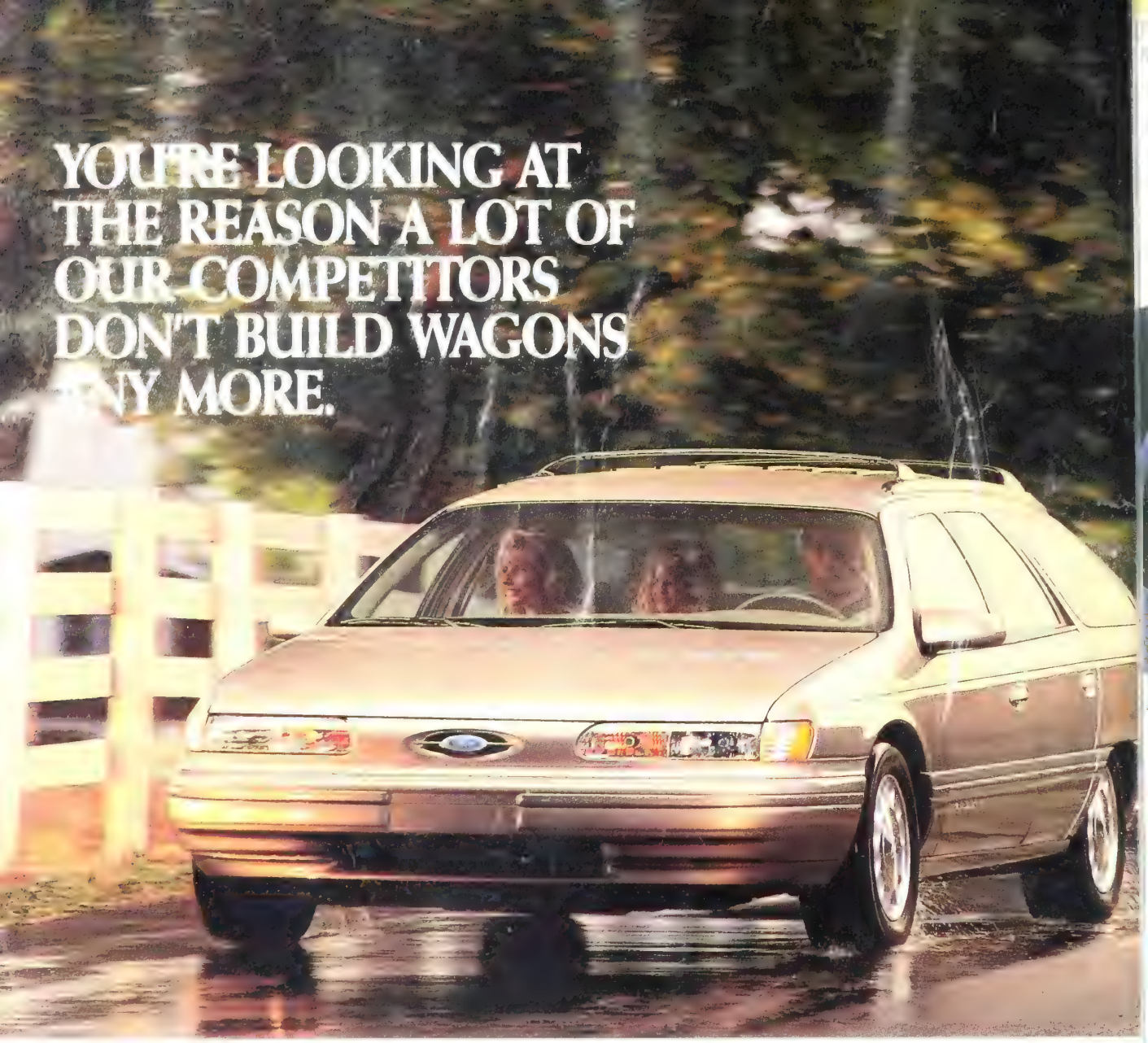


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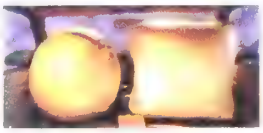
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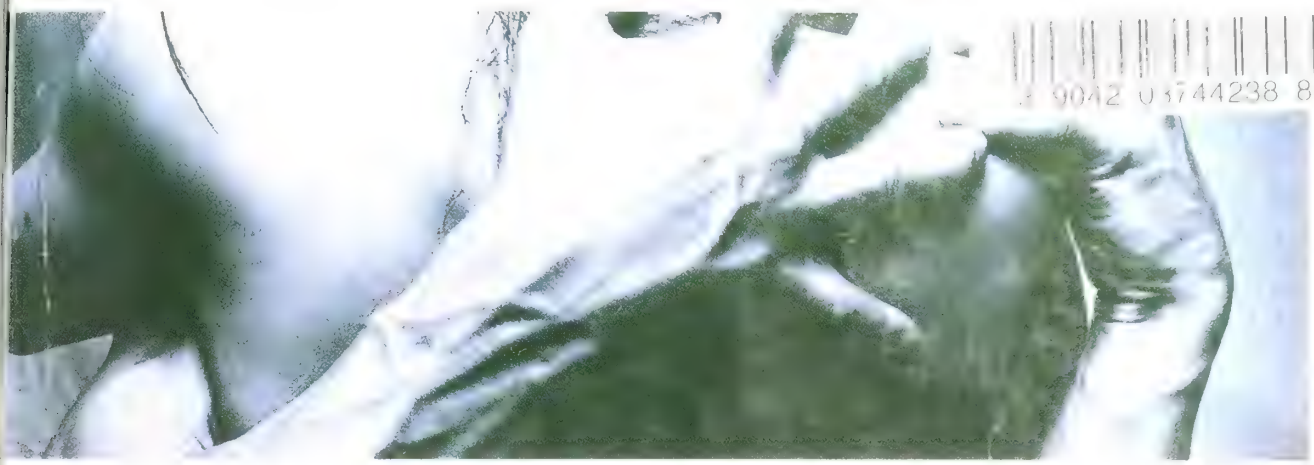
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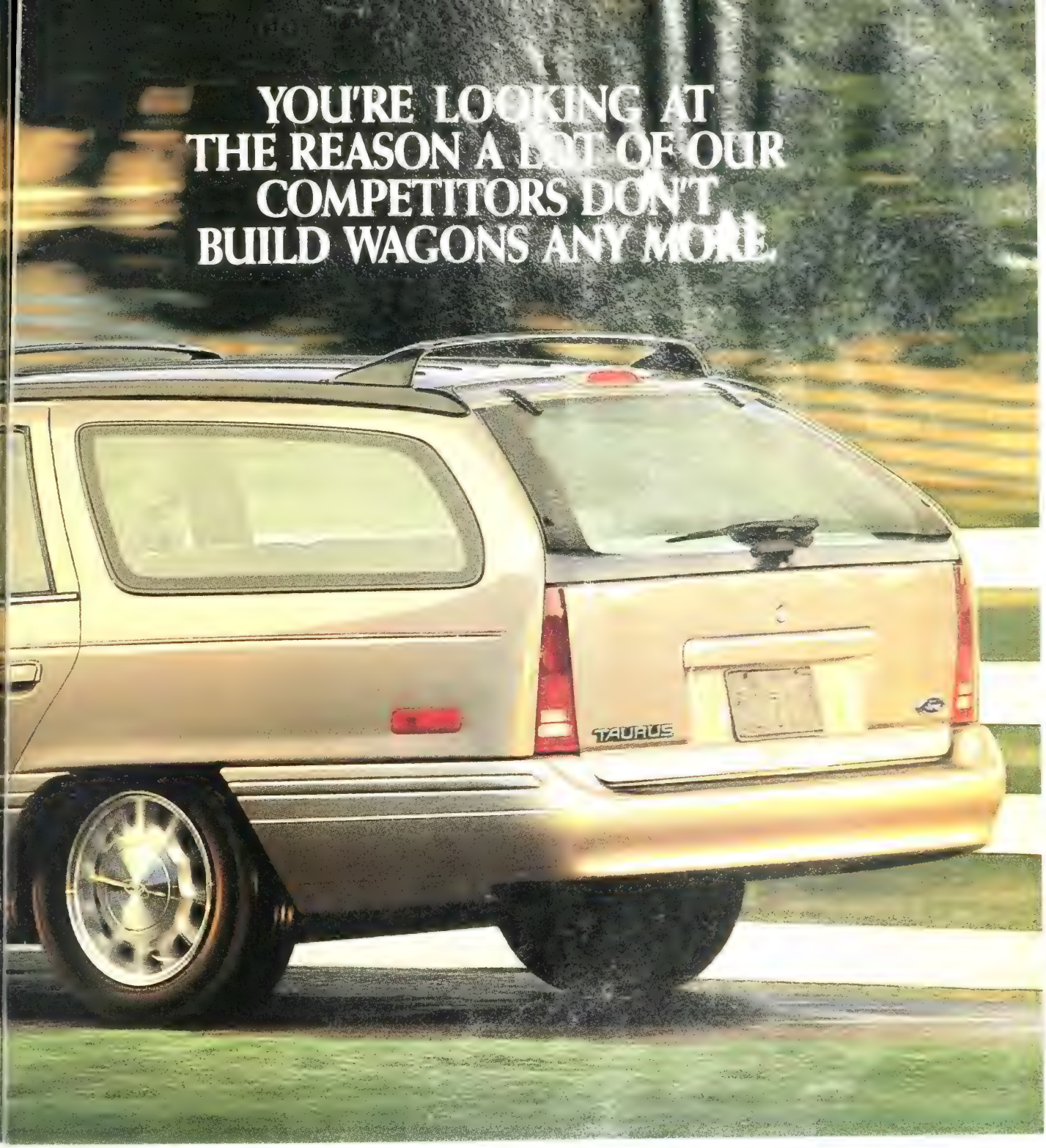


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LETTERS

Do We Need PBS?

One would think it impossible to write an article on a topic as broad as public television ["Adieu Big Bird," December] and barely touch upon what is really happening in this industry. But Lewis Lapham has done so. His description is unrecognizable to anyone with even the slightest knowledge of its programs, educational activities, and technological innovations. In his attempt to take a wide view of public television, Lapham has ended up looking through the wrong end of the telescope.

Lapham admits, reluctantly, that the experience with his own PBS series, *Bookmark*, which ended in 1991, has tainted his view. This is an understatement. His account reads like the recollection of a presidential administration from the vantage point of the cook. Interesting, clever perhaps, but woefully myopic. Where's the rest of the story?

In his essay, Lapham treats as a great revelation what many observers already know: public television is underfunded, and has been so for nearly four decades. It continues to thrive because the demand for quality programming and educational services is met through a strong partnership of viewers, corporations, local, state, and federal governments, foundations, and educational institutions.

What Lapham misses is that public television has entered a new age in which its noncommercial *bona fides* is liable to be increasingly valued as the television industry moves toward a 500 channel environment (that's 500 *commercial* channels, one assumes). He seems not to realize that PBS distributes more than 1,600 original hours of programming to stations annually. These shows take on tough political and social issues (for which we get our share of criticism from all sides of the political spectrum), bringing the best of American culture to every home, and lead the way in children's programs. Yet Lapham points to a couple of programs he doesn't like and therefore condemns the whole system.

As for what public television *should* do, Lapham writes, "I could imagine [PBS] cameras in state legislatures and city halls, in university lecture rooms . . ." Has he been watching PBS? Our cameras have regularly brought the public to state legislatures, city halls, and university lecture rooms. The Watergate hearings, Supreme Court confirmation hearings, and other important events have been made available to the entire nation through public TV.

As a community-based service that costs every American $1 a year in federal taxes, public television generates five times that in community support. It speaks to its audience—which includes all Americans, rich and poor—as intelligent citizens rather than as mere consumers. For forty years there has been consistent acclaim for public television's editorial integrity and overall mission. Certainly, there is plenty of room for improvement. Public television is constantly evolving, transforming itself to meet the needs of all

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mation [illegible] should have taken

Executive Vice President, PBS
Alexandria, Va.

Finally, a journalist has had the guts [illegible] courage those within the system to take a good, hard look at their dilettantism and hypocrisy.

Yet Lapham fails to comment on two of the most egregious abuses fostered by the system. First is its wastefulness. To see this problem, one need only to look at the number of vice presidents and programming officials at some PBS stations and then observe [illegible] produce. WNET in New York City [illegible]

[illegible] the influence of the BBC on PBS programming. A casual stroll through the corridors of WGBH-Boston tells all. [illegible] broadcasting arm. Our American colleagues—WGBH [illegible] fewer and fewer—seem to feel culturally inferior to producers from the U.K. One wonders whether all those so-called co-productions with the BBC are designed to provide employment for American broadcast journalists or for their British counterparts. This is a particularly crucial point, since our tax dollars are in question. It appears that [illegible] market while keeping talented American television journalists at bay.

[illegible] trigger the same sort of critical evaluation of PBS that is regularly lavished on commercial broadcasting. At least commercial broadcasters do not confuse art and commerce. PBS, on the other hand, is intellectually pretentious. We know whereof we speak.

[illegible]

Though public television may restrict artistic freedom, Lewis Lapham errs in PBS. Instead, he should have questioned their very legitimacy. After all, it is due to economic imperatives rather than political agendas that public [illegible] the ratings game—with all its concomitant trappings [illegible] programming attractive to sponsors and donors alike.

As Lapham notes, viewers can find comparable programming on rival cable channels, such as Discover, A&E, and CNN. As cable reaches more and more people across the country, public television will appear redundant rather than irrelevant.

Lapham mentions these developments only in passing and misses the greater opportunity to press PBS management to substantiate itself. The simple fact is that public broadcasting cannot compete in today's market. If PBS closed its doors tomorrow, what would become of "quality programming"? Cable channels would bolster their own programming and pick up favorites such as *Masterpiece Theatre* and *Mystery*. Viewers, then, would not say adieu to Big Bird but rather welcome him to a new neighborhood. That would at once be the legacy left by and the undoing of PBS.

[illegible]
Indianapolis

Should Apes Make Us Laugh?

Vicki Hearne's defense of Bobby Berosini's orangutan act ["Can an Ape Tell a Joke?" November 1993] was troubling. The case of Berosini, it may be remembered, began when a casino dancer secretly videotaped Berosini's repeated backstage beating of endangered orangutans. Subsequently, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) filed a formal complaint with the United States Department of Agriculture, charging that the orangutans Berosini uses as props in his nightclub act spend almost their entire existence, when not on the stage, "containerized" individually in solid, stainless-steel boxes the size of kitchen refrigerators. Isolated from one another, with nothing to look at but four metal walls and unable to stretch out even to sleep, the orangutans were [illegible] kept for ten years or more in areas less [illegible] space required by federal law. Primatologists from all over the world, including Dr. Jane Goodall and Dr. Birute Galdikas, the undisputed world experts in orangutan behavior, have signed affidavits condemning Berosini's treatment of the orangutans in his custody.

Hearne may find the sight of an intelligent, once-dignified, endangered great ape giving the finger, making raspberry noises, and exposing his buttocks an indication of the orangutan's natural "humor." But, contrary to Her belief, orangutans do not have a "mischievous nodding grin." Like chimpanzees, orangutans display their teeth when afraid, not when amused. Those of us who have visited the smoke-filled casino where the animals performed twice a night, seen the photographs of the tiny steel boxes in which they spent much of their lives, spoken to the many eyewitnesses of the beatings, and watched the videotapes shot backstage believe the time has come to let the animals live free in their homelands.

Ingrid E. Newkirk
Chairperson, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals
Washington

In her essay, Vicki Hearne mentions a statement that I made about animal trainers—namely, that "you can get anyone to do anything if you beat them." She then goes on to argue that this would work only if the animal or person could not escape. This would not apply, she suggests, to Berosini because his orangs are at liberty onstage. I am aware that Hearne is an animal trainer herself and would like to put that profession in a good light, but she cannot change the laws of learning or behavior just to make her fellow trainer look good. Hearne apparently does not understand the dynamics of abuse and control. She might be amazed to find out that abused wives are at liberty—many even go to the store by themselves—yet continue to return to their abusive husbands and obey them. She would probably also be amazed by the fact that abused children often appear to be closest to their most abusive parent and, publicly, show very strong attachment to that parent. In other words, emotional bonding can occur with pain as well as with pleasure. I

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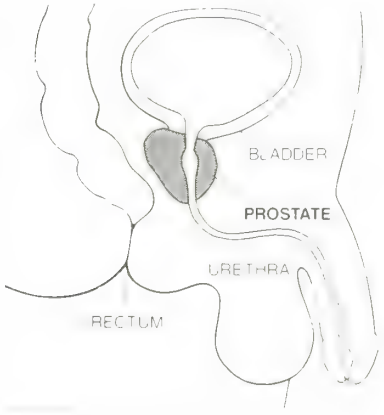
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As a man ages, a key hormone can help cause the prostate to grow. PROSCAR actually blocks the production of this hormone, so it helps shrink the prostate to a smaller size in many men. As a result, some men treated with PROSCAR experience an increased urinary flow and an improvement in urinary symptoms.

Why you should see your doctor soon.

Your doctor has several options for the treatment of symptomatic BPH: watchful waiting (monitoring the condition with regular checkups), medication, or surgery. It's important to see your doctor because the problem doesn't usually get better by itself. In many cases, the prostate continues to enlarge and the symptoms may get worse. So if your urinary symptoms are bothering you, have your family doctor or a urologist assess your condition and ask if PROSCAR is an appropriate treatment for you.



The prostate surrounds part of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder. As the prostate enlarges it can [illegible]

It is also important to have regular checkups. *While benign prostate enlargement is not cancer and does not cause cancer, the two conditions can exist at the same time.*

Remember, only a doctor can evaluate your symptoms and their possible causes. So, if your urinary symptoms are bothering you, don't wait any longer. You may find that your enlarged prostate can be made into a smaller problem.

For more information about prostate enlargement and PROSCAR, call 1-800-635-4452 today.

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Please see [illegible]

PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR

Generic name: finasteride (fin-AS-tur-eyed)

PROSCAR is for the treatment of symptomatic benign prostatic hyperplasia and for use in men only.

[illegible] PROSCAR. If you [illegible] BPH. [illegible]

Please read this information, as well as the leaflet which accompanies your medication, before you start taking PROSCAR. Also, read the leaflet each time you renew your prescription, just in case anything has changed. Remember, this leaflet does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss PROSCAR when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups.

What is BPH?

BPH is an enlargement of the prostate gland. After age 50, most men develop enlarged prostates. The prostate is located below the bladder. As the prostate enlarges, it may slowly restrict the flow of urine. This can lead to symptoms such as:

- a weak or interrupted urinary stream
- a feeling that you cannot empty your bladder completely
- a feeling of delay or hesitation when you start to urinate
- a need to urinate often, especially at night
- a feeling that you must urinate right away.

Treatment options for BPH

There are three main treatment options for BPH:

- **Program of monitoring or "Watchful Waiting".** If a man has an enlarged prostate gland and no symptoms or if his symptoms do not bother him, he and his doctor may decide on a program of monitoring which would include regular checkups, instead of medication or surgery.
- **Medication.** Your doctor may prescribe PROSCAR for BPH. See **"What PROSCAR does"** below.
- **Surgery.** [illegible] surgery. Your doctor can describe several different surgical procedures for BPH. Which procedure is best depends on your symptoms and medical condition.

What PROSCAR does

PROSCAR lowers levels of a key hormone called DHT (dihydrotestosterone), which is a major cause of prostate growth. Lowering DHT leads to shrinkage of the enlarged prostate gland in most men. This can lead to gradual improvement in urine flow and [illegible]. However, since each case of BPH is different, you should know that:

- Even though the prostate shrinks, you may NOT see an improvement in urine flow or symptoms.
- You may need to take PROSCAR for six (6) months or more to see whether it helps you.
- Even though you take PROSCAR and it may help you, it is not known whether PROSCAR reduces the need for surgery.

What you need to know while taking PROSCAR

- **You must see your doctor regularly.** While taking PROSCAR, you must have regular checkups. Follow your doctor's advice [illegible].
- **About side effects.** Like all prescription drugs, PROSCAR may cause side effects. Side effects due to PROSCAR may include impotence (or inability to have an erection) and less desire for sex. Each of these side effects occurred in less than 4% of patients in clinical studies. In some cases side effects went away while the patient continued to take PROSCAR. Some men taking PROSCAR (Finasteride) may have a decrease in the amount of semen released during sex. This decrease does not appear to interfere with normal sexual function.

You should discuss side effects with your doctor before taking PROSCAR and anytime you think you are having a side effect.

- **Checking for prostate cancer.** Your doctor has prescribed PROSCAR for symptomatic BPH and not for cancer, but a man can have BPH and prostate cancer at the same time. Doctors usually recommend that men be checked for prostate cancer once a year when they turn 50 (or 40 if a family member has had prostate cancer). These checks should continue while you take PROSCAR. PROSCAR is not a treatment for prostate cancer.
- **About prostate specific antigen (PSA).** Your doctor may have done a blood test called PSA. PROSCAR can alter PSA values. For more information, talk to your doctor.
- **A warning about PROSCAR and pregnancy.**

PROSCAR is for use by MEN only.

PROSCAR is generally well tolerated in men. However, women who are pregnant, or women who could become pregnant, should avoid the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

If the active ingredient is absorbed by a woman who is pregnant with a male baby, it may cause the male baby to be born with abnormalities of the sex organs. Therefore, any woman who is pregnant or who could become pregnant must not come into direct contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

Two of the ways in which a woman might absorb the active ingredient in PROSCAR are:

Sexual contact. Your semen may contain a small amount of the active ingredient of the drug. If your partner is pregnant, or if you and your partner decide to have a baby, you must stop taking PROSCAR and talk to your doctor. If your partner could become pregnant, proper use of a condom can reduce the risk of exposing her to your semen (discuss this further with your doctor).

Handling broken tablets. Women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant must not handle broken tablets of PROSCAR.

PROSCAR tablets are coated to prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling. If this coating is broken, the tablets should not be handled by women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant.

If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR, a doctor should be consulted. Remember, these warnings apply only if the woman exposed to PROSCAR is pregnant or could become pregnant.

How to take PROSCAR

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take PROSCAR. You must take it every day. You may take it with or between meals. To avoid forgetting to take PROSCAR, it may be helpful to take it the same time every day.

Do not share PROSCAR with anyone else; it was prescribed only for you.

Keep PROSCAR and all medicines out of the reach of children.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR AND BPH, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER.

MERCK

[illegible]

wish the magical world Hearne paints of trained-animal acts were true—for the animals' sake. Unfortunately, it's not. There is nothing magical about it for the animals.

Roger S. Fouts
Ellensburg, Wash.

The Reality of Reality TV

In a college writing course, some fellow students and I were asked to read Debra Seagal's "Tales from the Cutting-Room Floor" [November] as the basis for a discussion on the ethics of "creative non-fiction." Seagal spent six months logging videotape of arrests, drug busts, and raids for the reality-based television cop show *American Detective*. We were all disturbed by the extent to which her employers emphasized story—an exciting, focused, and artificially resolved narrative—over the sad and perplexing "reality" locked away in video vaults, labeled unusable.

The subject of Seagal's essay made it all the more ironic that she used a fictional technique—the convention of the diary—to present her story. Doubtless a real diary provided the author's raw material, but I question the veracity of such polished, maybe even slightly retouched, daily reflections. Couldn't it be said that Seagal's essay, in implying a super-diarist persona who incidentally produces some prime journalism, uses the same artifice that it condemns in *American Detective*?

Mary Burns
Longwood, Fla.

Cigarettes: Less Than Sublime?

Richard Klein's "ode and elegy" to the black prince of tobacco products ["The Dark Beauty of the Cigarette," Readings, November] cribs its more striking ideas from eighteenth-century philosophy, some of the tenets of which are reflected in twentieth-century advertising: Philip Morris has long rendered the Sublime and the Beautiful a visual reality. The Marlboro Man understands viscerally Edmund Burke's notions of sublimity (Burke's ideas on the subject informed those of Kant; Klein rarely knows from whom he borrows)—he smokes not as introspection or prayer but *because* smoking

arms others, and threat of pain "in-
ected by a power in some way superi
" is the root of Burkean sublimity.
The Marlboro Man is a powerful figure
ot because he can kill himself—
hich, in real life, he did—but be-
ause he can kill us.

Klein's gendered aesthetics match
urke and Philip Morris stroke for
roke: "hysterical" opponents of pub-
c smoking would take away the dark,
ecret "ritual of fire and smoke" and
hus demasculinize us, call us in from
he Alps or from Marlboro Country. If
Klein were not so confused ("Cigarettes
re bad. That is why they are good—
ot good, not beautiful, but sublime"),
would suggest that he was dangerous,
nd that his attempt to celebrate the
leaths of our loved ones from lung can-
er was tasteless. Such tastelessness, in
act, was exceeded only by *Harper's* ex-
ending the "celebration" to a full-page
igarette ad on the back cover of the is-
sue. Referring to the smoker's ability
to switch to a lower-tar cigarette, it
showed a man flexing his muscles,
laughing, and smoking beneath the
words "You can do it!" The encour-
agement of self-destruction and the
abuse of others is an old song, older by
far than the eighteenth century. I, for
one, have grown tired of it.

Philip E. Baruth
Winooski, Vt.

It must be a seemingly unassailable few who could still find moral—not to say theological—footing firm enough from which to condemn Richard Klein's profound illustration of the smoker's joy. Indeed, he has nearly convinced even me, who once would have savagely opposed him, of the undeniable *plaisir de fumer*. All that remains to be done before I lend my unqualified support to embattled smokers everywhere is for some clever soul to create an apparatus—some sort of pulmonary recirculation device—that would allow precious puffers like Klein to enjoy more purely and prolongingly the sublimity of their soot without exciting protest from the unenlightened and disbelieving around them. What a wonderful world it would be.

Matthew L. Boesch
Ithaca, N.Y.

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RAISING THE DEAD



RICHARD SELZER

On a spring afternoon in 1991, Richard Selzer, a retired surgeon and renowned essayist, collapsed in his study. Rushed to the hospital, he was diagnosed with Legionnaires' disease. Selzer lapsed into a coma and began a painful journey to a place where there was "more than a hint of death."

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NOTEBOOK

Spring list

By Lewis H. Lapham

She was not quite what you would call refined. She was not quite what you would call unrefined. She was the kind of person that keeps a parrot.

—Mark Twain

As an editor subject to the whim of intellectual fashion, I make occasional lists of the words and phrases that describe the arc of enlightened opinion and maintain their currency as the bearers of the season's received wisdom. The task is sometimes drudging and often frivolous, but it is not one that I can afford to neglect. If I fail to notice that last year's priceless truth has been transformed into this year's imbecile cliché, I run the risk of commissioning manuscripts from authors no longer infallible on topics that have ceased to exist.

The device of an alphabetical list I borrowed from Gustave Flaubert, who appreciated the difficulties as long ago as 1862 and defended himself against the newspapers by compiling a dictionary of accepted ideas. Some of his definitions remain in force ("WINDMILL: Looks well in a landscape"; "FLAG: The sight of it makes the heart beat faster"), but he addressed his remarks to a French instead of an American audience, and within the more advanced circles of opinion in New York, Los Angeles, and Washington they might convey an impression of being slightly behind the time. Flaubert never was given the chance to admire the political thought of Rush Limbaugh or applaud Norman Mailer's after-dinner speeches, and I doubt that he could have guessed at the simplicity of the language made for television or foreseen the capture of the universities by the forces of social conscience.

Even so, and much to his credit, Flaubert sought to allay the intellectual nervousness of the age, and he understood that no self-respecting editor or perfume merchant could attend the emperor Louis Napoleon on one of his hunting weekends at Compiegne without a wardrobe of proper opinions—preferably augmented with indications of appropriate inflection, stance, and tone of voice. It simply wouldn't do to stand around on the terrace and wonder about the provenance of the wine or the sexual orientation of the huntsmen. To arrive without a correct set of attitudes was almost as bad as to come dressed in last year's clothes. But how was one to know what was expected, and on whom could one rely for advice? Times change, and words once possessed of a plain meaning disappear behind the screens of political correctness. The deconstructions in progress at the universities loose the academic wrecking ball against the plaster facade of what was once known (erroneously) as Western Civilization, and on the scaffolding of a revised cultural history, critics recently arrived from points east and south raise the brightly colored flags of multiculturalism.

Fortunately for all concerned, we are a conservative people, preferring the semblance of social change to any serious interruption of the status quo, and our polite conversation, like our politics and manner of dress, returns over long periods of time the character of inoffensive and reassuring generality proper to *The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour* or a well-run military academy. When I first began arranging the definitions in alphabetical order, I didn't expect many of them to hold their value for more than a few weeks, let alone for an entire publishing season. What surprised me was the remarkable stability of the opinions welcome [illegible] Over the last twenty-odd years a small number of [illegible] "Consciousness III"), and a few words have lost their point or shifted their connotations to the historical past ("Soviets," "Watergate," "Cold War," "George Bush"), but for the most part the wisdom in office has remained as impervious to [illegible] or literary fashion as the image of Elizabeth Taylor.

In some instances [illegible] proper usage depends upon prior recognition of the dominant prejudice already assembled in the ballroom or at the conference table. In blatantly conservative company [illegible] Orange County, California, say, or at a fund-raising dinner sponsored by The Heritage Foundation) the words "sexist" and "racist" always must be presented with a heavily sarcastic intonation, implying contempt for people who [illegible] anything; among avowed liberals gathered on West Seventy-ninth Street in Manhattan to celebrate a new book by Gloria Steinem or Susan Sontag, the same words should carry the weight of [illegible] they accurately described the entire white male population of West Virginia, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Assuming that any questions of [illegible] can be answered by glancing at the jewelry of the other people in the room, I like to think that no matter what the topic of conversation—an outbreak of war or semiotics, the sighting of a political prophet in the deserts of California, the splendor of pheasants [illegible]

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er can offer or advance any opinion on the following list in the certain knowledge that it is both tasteful and safe.

ART: Ennobling. Never enough of it.

BOSNIA: Tragic story.

BUREAUCRACY: Enemy of free enterprise. No bureaucrat knows what it means to take a risk.

CALIFORNIA: Paradise lost — fallen victim to fire, race riot, and earthquake. Everybody who is anybody in Brentwood is moving to Montana.

CAMPAIGN PROMISES: All empty. Compare them to a rich man's ceaseless revision of his will.

CHARDONNAY: Grape from which all wine is made.

CHINA: Glorious proof of the capitalist miracle. Every two weeks another 4,000 Chinese become millionaires.

COLD WAR: Lament its absence. The world is far more dangerous without it. Say, in a wistful voice, "We'll be lucky to see its like again."

COUPS D'ETAT: Customary in the tropics.

CRIMINALS: Responsible for their crimes.

CRITICS: Egotistical and venomous, but most of them can be appeased with a $200 lunch at the Four Seasons. They speak only to one another.

DEFICIT (THE): Deadlier than famine or war. Time bomb. "In the end it will kill us all."

DISARMAMENT: Well-meaning notion but impractical. "If the rest of the world were as civilized as the United States, then there might be something in it." Say the millennium has not yet arrived.

DISCIPLINE: Essential in investment managers and college students.

DOCTORS: Incompetent. Most operations are unnecessary. You are more likely to be killed in a hospital than in a traffic accident.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY: All the women were beautifully dressed, but by the age of forty they went bald and lost their teeth. The century was good at

music and politics, but it had no sense of hygiene.

ENTREPRENEURS: Heroes of our time. Most of them started their companies in a garage.

ESTABLISHMENT: Doesn't exist. Vicious canard circulated by envious intellectuals.

FALSTAFF: Fat man with a zest for life. Anything loud is Falstaffian.

FASCISM: Hitler gave it a bad name.

FOREIGNERS: All selfish. They used to come to New York and Washington to borrow money and admire the American president. Now they come to buy office buildings and demand trade concessions.

FREE LUNCH: No such thing. Liberals believe in its existence, which is why they lose so many elections.

FREE TRADE: Engine of progress. Synonym for democracy. The reason we are all standing here in Italian suits and Chinese sneakers.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS: Sadly abused. "Yes, the safety of the Republic depends upon it, but why must journalists make so much money?"

"GETTING TOUGH": The only mode of conduct that makes an impression on people who have lost all respect for human decency.

GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS: Compare them to serpents or vines. They strangle the sinews of industry.

GREAT BOOKS (THE): On closer inspection they prove to be the work of racial or sexual propagandists. You don't need to read them.

HAITI: Tragic story.

HOMELESS (THE): Always with us. One must learn to look beyond them. If they were serious about their lives, they would go to California and become rich.

IMPERIALISM: Lost art. The British used to be wonderfully good at it.

IRREDENTISM: Meaning unknown. Goes well in a remark about Yugoslavia or Ukraine. (*See* REVANCHIST)

LABOR UNIONS: More corrupt than big business.

[illegible] the overpaid [illegible] need to live.

[illegible] by bad [illegible] coaches. A [illegible] voice what [illegible] pen it. Put [illegible] country.

[illegible] ical malcontent. A few of them still can be found in [illegible] the nation's oldest universities.

[illegible] art, like knitting or preserving jam. Only a very few people have a talent for it.

MEN: More vain than women.

MEN (REAL): Vanishing species. Those few still extant enjoy after-tax incomes in excess of $20 million a year, which is how one knows they're real and not synthetic.

[illegible]

MIDDLE AGES: Poetic time. Nobody was interested in money, and most of the women knew how to talk to rabbits and birds. Mourn the passing of the troubadours.

MULTICULTURALISM: Modern form of ancestor worship. Very fashionable.

MUNICH: Must never happen again. Express contempt for Chamberlain's umbrella.

NIXON (RICHARD M.): Unjustly maligned. "Say what you will about Dick Nixon, he knew how to play the game of geopolitics."

NOVELS: All the good ones come from Eastern Europe or Latin America.

OIL: The lifeblood of freedom.

OUTRAGE (MORAL): Noble passion. Obligatory when discussing torturers or slumlords.

[illegible] played at White House banquets.

[illegible] Timid jargon that saps the strength of newspeak [illegible]

[illegible] make a profession of [illegible]. Feel

[illegible] portant people spent most of their time

[illegible] ably so. The memory of Napoleon, [illegible] soul.

SAUDI ARABIANS: Hold very austere religious beliefs. They execute women taken in adultery and punish homo- [illegible] planes.

[illegible] fun place to visit, if not for its tourist attractions at least for its teaching of [illegible] to its needs.

[illegible] whenever possible. He saw it all more than a hundred years ago.

TIRADES: Scraps of paper.

TWELVE STEPS: Must be taken one at a [illegible]

WASHINGTON, D.C.: City abandoned to sybaritic luxury. The members of Congress are all millionaires.

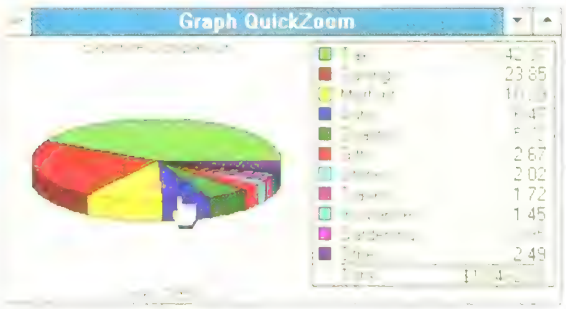
[illegible] stroyed by television and the English departments at Duke and Stanford universities.



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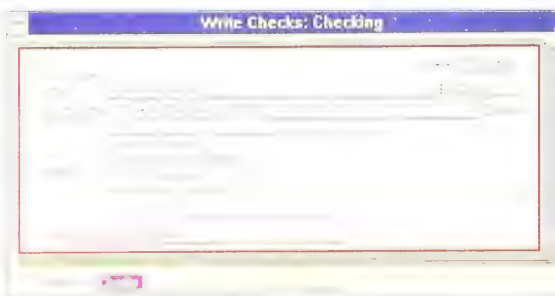
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It's so fast, we can squeeze the finances between kids and meals. Those old [illegible] for taxes or tracking business expenses are neat and sweet because they're automatic. And you wouldn't believe what a thrill it [illegible] the penny—in a matter of minutes!

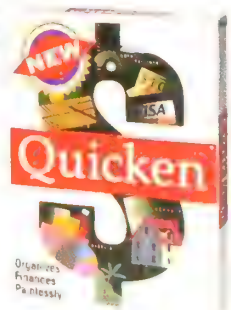
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HARPER'S INDEX

Change, since last year, in the amount of Pentagon [illegible] :

Chances that an American opposes any cuts in defense spending : 2 in 3

Change, since 1982, in the number of developing countries under military rule : +11

Ratio of the amount Americans believe is spent on U.S. foreign [illegible] :

Ratio of funds sent home by migrant workers worldwide [illegible] :

Percentage of Mexico City residents who consider [illegible] :

Percentage of Americans who [illegible] :

Number of Clinton appointees found to be delinquent in paying social [illegible] :

Number of high-level aides to California senator Dianne Feinstein who quit during her first year in the Senate : 11

Number of U.S. politicians who have appeared on *Sesame Street* : 4

Portion of 1993 *Rolling Stone* covers on which no musicians appear : 1/4

Percentage of the *Parents* magazine editorial staff that is childless : 55

Chances that an American girl whose mother receives welfare will also receive welfare [illegible] :

Number of the 61 children murdered in Chicago last year whose mothers first gave birth as teens : 47

Number of condoms that will be distributed in Volusia County, Florida, during spring break this year : 50,000

Percentage of American 18- to 29-year-olds who say their chances of getting AIDS are zero : 63

Calls made to the DOE hotline last December by Americans believing they had been used in radioactive drug tests : 12,000

Legal fees paid by the DOE since 1990 to defend its contractors in suits over radiation [illegible] :

Portion of all nuclear reactors currently under construction worldwide that are of Soviet design : 1/3

Portion of the world's landmass that rightfully belongs to Russia, according to Vladimir Zhirinovsky : 1/5

Ratio of Russians who believe that Zhirinovsky is a "fascist" to those who believe he is "the man of the year" : 1:1

Number of Ukrainians who have joined the Communist Party since the ban on it was lifted last October : 46,000

Chances that an officer in the Ukrainian Army is an ethnic Russian : 2 in 3

Estimated percentage change, since 1984, in the number of Chinese living in Moscow : +32,000

Number of Samoans who are Mormons : 51,000

Percentage change, since 1991, in sales at Thailand's 270 7-Elevens : +700

Price of an electronic rosary, from the Divine Love Sanctuary in Rome : $40.99

Amount for which a robber beat a motel security guard to death with a Bible last summer in Georgia : $18

Average cost of hospitalizing a gunshot-wound victim in the United States : $20,750

Factor by which the murder rate in Washington, D.C., last year exceeded that of Northern Ireland : 15

Percentage change, between 1992 and 1993, in the average birth weight of a baby born in Sarajevo : – 19

Percentage of all humans who have ever lived past the age of 65 who are alive today : 20

Chances that an admission to South-Central Los Angeles's largest hospital will be through the emergency ward : 4 in 5

Chances that a fatal accident involving a Corvette will involve no other vehicle : 4 in 5

Chances that a fatal accident involving a passenger car and a large truck will kill the truck driver : 1 in 50

Number of canine fatalities during last winter's Iditarod dogsled race in Alaska : 6

Average number of "pet bereavement" clients seen each week last year by Diane Kelly, a California therapist : 20

Maximum number of four-legged pets a resident of West University Place, Texas, is allowed to own : 3

Maximum height, in inches, a resident's grass may grow there : 10

Figures cited are the latest available [illegible]

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The Berger 100 is a growth fund and offers an ideal vehicle to invest [illegible] companies.

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READINGS

[Essay]

A COSMOPOLITAN AMONG THE TRUE BELIEVERS

From Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism, *by Michael Ignatieff, a chronicle of his travels in Croatia, Serbia, Germany, Ukraine, Quebec, Kurdistan, and Northern Ireland, to be published next month by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. Ignatieff, who lives in London, is the author of several books of fiction and non-fiction; his new novel,* Scar Tissue, *will be published by Farrar, Straus later this year.*

Anyone whose father was born in Russia, whose mother was born in England, who was educated in America, and whose working life has been spent in Canada, Great Britain, and France cannot be expected to be much of an ethnic nationalist. For many years, I believed that the tide was running in favor of cosmopolitans like me. There seemed to be so many of us, for one thing. There were at least a dozen world cities—gigantic, multi-ethnic melting pots that provided a home for expatriates, exiles, migrants, and transients of all kinds. For the urban professional populations of these major cities, a post-national state of mind was simply taken for granted. People in these places did not bother about the passports of the people they worked or lived with; they did not care about the country-of-origin label on the goods they bought. They simply assumed that in constructing their own way of life they would borrow from the customs of every nation they happened to admire.

This cosmopolitan ethic is not in itself altogether new. We have lived with global economy since 1700, and many of the world's great cities have been global entrepôts for centuries. But in 1989 we entered the first era of global cosmopolitanism in which there was no imperial framework for imperial order. For two hundred years prior, the global expansion of capitalism was shaped by the territorial ambitions and policing authority of a succession of imperial powers—the British, French, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the Soviet and American joint imperium after the Second World War.

America may still be a superpower, but it is not an imperial power. Its authority is exercised in the defense of exclusively national interest, not in the maintenance of an imperial system. Consequently, as a result, large sections of Africa, Eastern Europe, Soviet Asia, Latin America, and the Near East no longer come within any clearly defined sphere of imperial or great-power influence. This means that huge sections of the world's population have won the "right of self-determination" only to find that they have been simply been left to fend for themselves. Small wonder, then, that, unrestrained by stronger hands, they have set upon one another for that final settling of scores so long deferred by the presence of empire.

With blithe lightness of mind, we had assumed that the world was moving irrevocably beyond nationalism, beyond tribalism, beyond the [illegible] of the nineteenth century, and that we were entering a world of global market economy and we were to be our new home. History, we were told, had come to the end. The [illegible] the new world order is the disintegration of na

BOSTON'S REIGN OF TERROR

From "Fear City," a pamphlet distributed last December to tourists and residents in downtown Boston by off-duty police officers. The pamphleting campaign, which was coordinated by the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association, the local police union, coincided with the start of contract negotiations between the city and the union. Richard Bradley, the president of the BPPA, denied that the pamphlet was a negotiating tool; it was provided, Bradley said, as a "public service." Boston ranks thirteenth among the twenty largest American cities in murders per capita.

Welcome to Boston, Massachusetts—Fear City, USA.

Whether you are a visitor to Boston or a resident, we offer the following precautions as a survival guide to help you keep your body, life, mind, and property intact. To increase your chance for survival, observe the procedures outlined in this pamphlet. We hope you will enjoy Boston in comfort and safety, instead of becoming the victim of a stabbing, rape, robbery, or murder.

1. Stay off the streets after 6:00 P.M.

After dark, Boston Common is a high-risk area. Recently there has been an increase in assaults, stabbings, and murders in the Faneuil Hall area, especially between 10:00 P.M. and 3:00 A.M.

2. Do not walk

If you must venture into Boston's streets, try not to go alone. Call a taxi by telephone, or ask the hotel doorman to call a taxi while you remain inside the lobby of your hotel. Follow this same procedure when leaving a theater, restaurant, Boston Garden, or other day or night activities.

Avoid public transportation

A subway ride is high-risk and getting worse. At only a slight risk, you may ride buses during [illegible] hours.

4. Don't think your hotel is safe—it isn't

Hotel crimes in Boston are always a problem. Do not leave valuables in your hotel room.

In the event that you require police assistance, be patient. Staffing of the Boston police patrol is at its lowest level in the city's history, especially from 12:00 A.M. to 7:30 A.M., when 700,000 citizens and visitors are protected by 80 officers.

tion-states into ethnic civil war; the key architects of that order are warlords. The repressed has returned, and its name is nationalism.

Everywhere I've been, nationalism is most violent where the group you are defining yourself against most closely resembles you. A rational explanation of conflict would predict the reverse to be the case. To outsiders at least, Ulstermen look and sound like Irishmen, just as Serbs look and sound like Croats—yet the very similarity is what pushes them to define themselves as polar opposites. Since Cain and Abel, we have known that hatred between brothers is more ferocious than hatred between strangers. We say tritely that this is so because hatred is a form of love turned against itself. Or that we hate most deeply what we recognize as kin. Or that violence is the ultimate denial of an affiliation we cannot bear. None of this will do. There are puzzles that no theory of nationalism, no theory of the narcissism of minor difference, can resolve. After you have been to the wastelands of the new world order, particularly to those fields of graves marked with numberless wooden crosses, you feel stunned into silence by a deficit of moral explanation.

In his 1959 essay "What Does Coming to Terms with the Past Mean?" Theodor Adorno says, in passing, "Nationalism no longer quite believes in itself." Everywhere I went, there was a bewildering insincerity and inauthenticity to nationalist rhetoric, as if the people who mouthed nationalist slogans were aware, somewhere inside, of the implausibility of their own words. Serbs who, in one breath, would tell you that all Croats were Ustashe beasts would, in the next, recall the happy days when they lived with them in peace. In this divided consciousness, the plane of abstract fantasy and the plane of direct experience were never allowed to intersect.

Nationalism is a form of speech that shouts, not merely so that it will be heard but so that it will believe itself. It is almost as if the quotient of crude historical fiction, violent moral exaggeration, ludicrous caricature of the enemy is in direct proportion to the degree to which the speaker is himself aware that it is all really a pack of lies. But this insincerity may be a functional requirement of a language that is burdened with the task of insisting upon such a high volume of untruths. The nationalist vision of an ethnically pure state, for example, has the task of convincing ordinary people to disregard stubbornly adverse sociological realities, like the fact that most societies are not and have never been ethnically pure. That such fantasies do take hold of large numbers of people is a testament to the deep longing people have to escape the stubborn realities of life.

Nationalism, in this interpretation, is a lan-

[Photographs]

BIMBO ERUPTIONS, RUSSIAN-STYLE



The photographs above, of Vladimir Zhirinovsky and an unidentified woman, appeared in issue no. 8 of Zhirinovsky's Falcon, *a newspaper published by Russia's Liberal Democratic Party. The ultranationalist LDP party, led by Zhirinovsky, won 23 percent of the party-list vote in the Russian parliamentary elections in December. The photos, which were published during the campaign, were part of an effort by Zhirinovsky to dispel rumors that he is gay. A headline over the photos read [illegible]. Actually, Zhirinovsky is married and has a son.*

guage of fantasy and escape. In many cases—Serbia is a flagrant example—nationalist politics is a full-scale, collective escape from the realities of social backwardness. Instead of facing up to the reality of being a poor, primitive, third-rate economy on the periphery of Europe, it is infinitely more attractive to listen to speeches about the heroic and tragic destiny of Serbia and to fantasize about the final defeat of her historic enemies. Nationalist rhetoric rewrites and re-creates the real world, turning it into a delusional realm of noble causes, tragic sacrifice, and cruel necessity.

Yet there is a further element to add to the picture. As all of us can see on our television screens, most nationalist violence is perpetrated by a small minority of males between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Some are psychopaths, but most are perfectly sane. Until I had spent some time at the checkpoints of the new world order, until I had encountered my quotient of young males intoxicated by the power of the guns on their hips, I had not understood how deeply [illegible] some, to have the power of life and death in their hands. It is a characteristic liberal error to suppose that everyone hates and fears violence. I met lots of young men who loved the ruins, loved the destruction, loved the power that came from the barrels of their guns.

Perhaps liberals have not understood the force of male resentment that has accumulated through centuries of gradual European pacification. Liberals have not reckoned with the male loathing of [illegible] of young males at the modern state's confiscation of their weapons. [illegible] explanations behind [illegible] to this deep substratum of male resentment at the civility and [illegible] It seems obvious that, [illegible] of the order of the father and nationalism is the rebellion of the sons. How else are we to account for the staggering gratuitousness and bestiality of nationalist violence, [illegible] bounds of earlier [illegible] self-defense, unless we [illegible] for the possibility that nationalism exists to warrant and legitimize

the sons' vengeance against the father?

My journeys have also made me rethink the nature of belonging. Any expatriate is bound to have moments of wishing for a more complete national belonging. But I have been to places where belonging is so strong, so intense, that I now recoil from it in fear. The rational core of such fear is that there is a deep connection between violence and belonging. The more strongly you feel the bonds of belonging to your own group, the more hostile, the more violent will your feelings be toward outsiders. When nationalists claim that national belonging is the overridingly important form of all belonging, they mean that there is no other form of belonging—to your family, work, or friends—that is secure if you do not have a nation to protect you. Without a nation's protection, everything that an individual values can be rendered worthless. Belonging, in this view, is first and foremost protection from violence. Where you belong is where you are safe; where you are safe is where you belong. You can't have this intensity of belonging without violence, because belonging of this intensity molds the individual conscience: if a nation gives people a reason to sacrifice themselves, it also gives them a reason to kill.

Throughout my travels, I kept remembering the scene in *Romeo and Juliet* in which Juliet whispers to herself on the balcony in her nightgown, unaware that Romeo is in the shadows listening. She is struggling to understand what it means for her, a Capulet, to fall in love with a Montague. Suddenly she exclaims,

> 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy;
> Thou art thyself though, not a Montague.
> What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,
> Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part
> Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!
> What's in a name?

On the front lines in Bosnia, in the housing projects of Loyalist and Republican Belfast, in all the places where the tribal gangsters—the Montagues and Capulets of our day—are enforcing the laws of ethnic loyalty, there are Juliets and Romeos who still cry out, "Oh, let me not be a Croatian, Serbian, Bosnian, Catholic, or Protestant. Let me be only myself."

But such people are an embattled minority. The world is run not by skeptics and ironists but by gunmen and true believers, and the new world they are bequeathing to the next century already seems a more violent and desperate place than I could ever have imagined. If I had supposed, as the Cold War came to an end, that the new world might be ruled by philosophers and poets, it was because I believed, foolishly, that the precarious civility and order of the states in which I live must be what all people rationally desire. Now I am not so sure. I began my journey as a liberal, and I end as one, but I cannot help thinking that liberal civilization—the rule of laws, not men, of argument in place of force, of compromise in place of violence—runs deeply against the human grain, and is achieved and sustained only by the most unremitting struggle against human nature. The liberal virtues—tolerance, compromise, reason—remain as valuable as ever, but they cannot be preached to those who are mad with fear or mad with vengeance. In any case, preaching always rings hollow. We must be prepared to defend these virtues by force, and the failure of the sated, cosmopolitan nations to do so has left the hungry nations sick with contempt for us.

Between the hungry and the sated nations, there is an impassable barrier of incomprehension. I've lived all my life in sated nation-states, in places that have no outstanding border disputes, are no longer ruled by foreigners or oppressors, where citizens are masters in their own house. Sated people can afford to be cosmopolitan; sated people can afford the luxury of condescending to the passions of the hungry. But among the Crimean Tatars, the Kurds, and the Cree, I met the hungry ones, peoples whose very survival will remain at risk until they achieve self-determination, whether in their own nation-state or in someone else's.

What's wrong with the world is not nationalism itself. Every people must have a home, every such hunger must be assuaged. What's wrong is the kind of nation, the kind of home that nationalists want to create and the means they use to seek their ends. Wherever I went, I found a struggle going on between those who still believe that a nation should be a home to all—and that race, color, religion, and creed should be

[Correction]

A (SOMEWHAT) EMOTIONAL SCENE

From a correction in the December 12, 1993, Los Angeles Times.

The *Times* erroneously reported Friday that Jill Lansing, attorney for Lyle Menendez, burst into tears at the conclusion of her closing argument in the Menendez brothers' murder trial. In fact, she became misty-eyed and had a catch in her voice.





"Laboratory" (left) and "Drums and Valves" (right), by Tom Collicott. He photographed [illegible] issue no. 2 of Blind Spot, *a journal of photography. Collicott lives in Seattle.*

no bar to belonging—and those who want their nation to be home only to their own. It's the battle between the civic and the ethnic nation. I know which side I'm on. I also know which side, right now, is winning.

[Deals]

ALL THE PRESIDENT'S HANDOUTS

From a list of "deals President Clinton made to buy votes in Congress" last fall to ensure passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement. The list, which appeared in the December 20, 1993, issue of The Nation, *was compiled by Sarah Anderson and Ken Silverstein of the Institute for Policy Studies, with the help of Public Citizen, an advocacy group. According to the authors, Clinton's deals "could cost taxpayers as much as $50 billion."*

Rep. E. B. Johnson (D., Tex.): Two additional C-17 military cargo planes (cost: $1.4 billion) to be built in her district. The C-17 has a history of technical failure, including doors opening during test flights and wings buckling.

Rep. J. J. Pickle (D., Tex.): A promise to site the $10 million Center for the Study of Trade in the Western Hemisphere in his district.

Rep. Glenn English (D., Okla.), Rep. Bill Brewster (D., Okla.), Rep. Bill Sarpalius (D., Tex.), Rep. Larry Combest (R., Tex.): Limits on Canadian shipments of durum wheat, used to make pasta, unless Canada cuts back on its own wheat subsidies.

Rep. E. Clay Shaw (R., Fla.): Administration pressure on Mexico to extradite a man suspected of raping the niece of Shaw's assistant.

Rep. Esteban Torres (D., Calif.), Rep. Xavier Becerra (D., Calif.), Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D., Calif.), Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D., Calif.), Rep. Ed Pastor (D., Ariz.), Rep. John Bryant (D., Tex.): $250 million in funding for the North American Development Bank, intended for infrastructure projects.

Rep. David Price (D., N.C.), Rep. Tim Valentine (D., N.C.), Rep. Bob Clement (D., Tenn.): Two international air routes to London awarded to American Airlines out of Nashville and Raleigh-Durham.

Rep. Bob Smith (R., Ore.), Rep. Joel Hefley (R., Colo.), Rep. Wayne Allard (R., Colo.), Rep. Bob Stump (R., Ariz.): Cut in planned increase of fees for grazing on federal lands, resulting in a loss of millions of dollars for the federal treasury.

Rep. Lewis Payne (D., Va.): Clinton's written promise to consider Payne's district as the site for the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

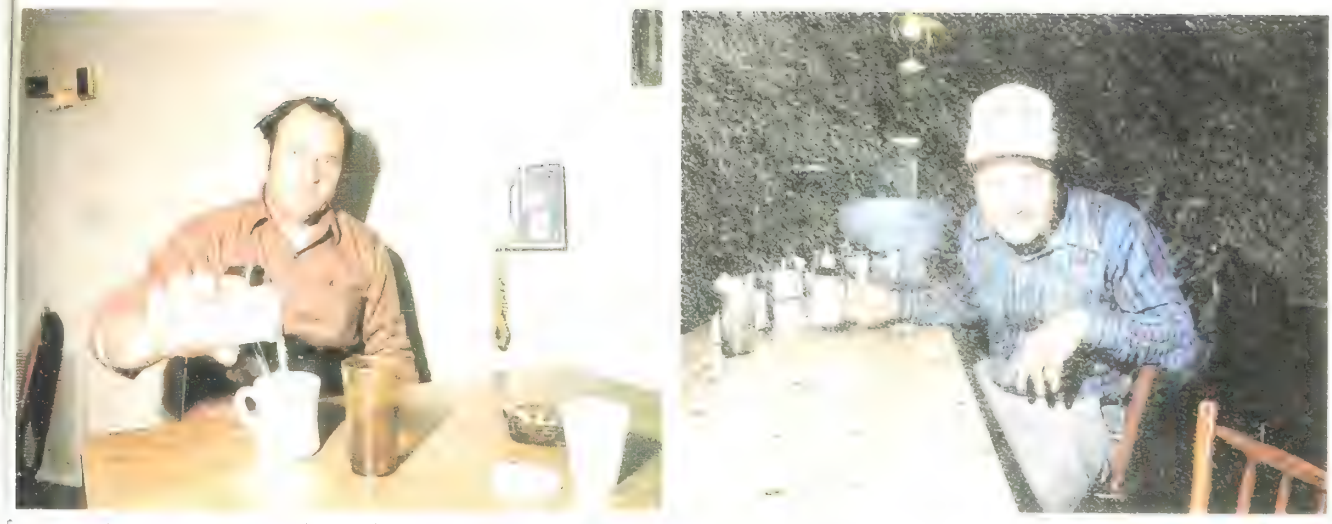
Rep. Fred Grandy (R., Iowa), Rep. Neal Smith (D., Iowa): Administration pressure on Mexico to hasten tariff reduction on appliances, a move that would [illegible] Amana and Maytag.

Rep. Porter Goss (R., Fla.), Rep. Dan Miller (R., Fla.), Rep. Tom Lewis (R., Fla.), Rep. Harry Johnston (D., Fla.), Rep. Jim Bacchus (D., Fla.), Rep. Carrie Meek (D., Fla.), Rep. Alcee Hastings (D., Fla.), Rep. Earl Hutto (D., Fla.), Rep. Tillie Fowler (R., Fla.), Rep. William Jefferson (D., La.), Rep. Jimmy Hayes (D., La.),

TRICKY DICK KITSCH

THE DELICATE ART OF CATCHING GAYS

S



"*Raymond, Mississippi, 1988*" *(left) and "Sayre, Oklahoma, 1988" (right), by Marc F. Wise, a West Newton, Massachusetts, photographer. From* Over the Road: Truckers and Truck Stops in America, *an exhibit [illegible] in New Orleans. Wise worked as a truck driver from 1987 to 1993 [illegible] truckers. His photographs also appeared in the November 1993 issue of* Texas Monthly.

ask them about the officer's observations.

Issue: Was the CO's action appropriate? If not, what action should he have taken?

Discussion: The officer's observation of the two service members walking and holding hands in the park constitutes credible information of homosexual conduct, if the officer is someone the CO otherwise trusts and believes. Therefore, the commanding officer may follow up and inquire further.

Before the service members are asked to discuss or explain the incident, the CO should advise them of the military's policy on homosexual conduct. If they decline to discuss the matter, the questioning should stop. At that point, the CO may consider other relevant information and decide whether to initiate administrative separation actions based on the information he possesses.

Situation: A noncommissioned officer (NCO) is watching local TV news coverage of a gay-rights parade when he notices a female service member assigned to his unit marching in the parade in civilian clothes and carrying a handmade placard. As the television camera zooms in on the service member's sign, the NCO can clearly read the handwritten words "Lesbians in the military say 'Lift the Ban!'" The next morning, the NCO reports the incident to his commander.

Issue: Should the commander inquire into what meaning the service member had intended to convey by carrying that particular sign in the gay-rights parade?

Discussion: A service member's carrying of a banner or sign in a gay-rights activity would not, in and of itself, constitute credible information indicating proscribed homosexual conduct. In this case, however, the [illegible] carry a sign that could reasonably be interpreted as making a statement that she is a homosexual. It would be reasonable to [illegible] to inquire whether the service member [illegible] were intended to inform the public that she is a "lesbian in the military." Such a statement [illegible] idence that the service member engages in homosexual acts or has an intent or propensity to do so.

Before questioning his subordinate about the incident, the commander should advise her of the military's policy on homosexual conduct. Should the service member choose not to discuss the matter further, the discussion should end. The commander would then decide whether to initiate administrative discharge procedures based on the information [illegible] by the CO.

Situation: [illegible] other officer, that he has recently come to terms with his sexuality and has decided that he is a homosexual [illegible] engage in homosexual acts during the remainder of military service, and that he will continue to refrain from such acts. After [illegible] the officer asks his friend [illegible] conversation [illegible] cer. Having determined that the friend's account [illegible] asks the officer whether he told his friend that he [illegible]

At a Board of Inquiry hearing, the officer pre[illegible]

subordinate enlisted persons who state that the officer has never stated or suggested to them that he is a homosexual and has never made any sexual advances toward them or engaged in sexual innuendo with them or anyone they know. The officer himself testifies that although he considers himself a homosexual he intends to continue to refrain from homosexual acts during the remainder of his term in service.

Issue: How should the Board of Inquiry determine whether the officer has successfully rebutted the presumption that he engages in or has the propensity or intent to engage in homosexual conduct?

Discussion: In making its determination, the board should consider the evidence that the officer had not engaged in any homosexual acts; the testimony from other service members about the officer's past conduct, character, and credibility; and the nature and circumstances of the officer's statements to his friend and CO. If the Board determines that the officer did not engage in homosexual acts and was not likely to do so, it would find that the officer had rebutted the presumption and would recommend that he be retained. If, however, in weighing all the evidence, the board determines that the officer had not rebutted the presumption, it would recommend separation.

[Rules]

CROSS-TRAINING

From the "Athlete Registration Book" for Gay Games IV, an international sports competition for gays and [illegible]. The manual explains that the games are intended to allow those "who have often been ostracized from sports and society" to experience the "thrill and pride" of the [illegible].

In order to be treated according to their [chosen] gender identification, participants must provide proof of compliance with the following policies:

1. Proof of a completed legal name change to match the desired gender role.

2. Letter from a medical physician stating that the participant has been actively involved in hormone treatment for a minimum of two full years without any time lapse. The letter must also explain the participant's current health condition.

3. Letter from a professional mental-health therapist stating that the participant has been actively involved in psychotherapy for a minimum of eighteen months. The letter must also state that this participant has emotionally and psychologically transitioned into the desired gender role and why it would be impossible or severely detrimental for this individual to participate in his or her biologically born gender.

All individuals will have a right to appeal an adverse decision to the Board Gender Identifi-

[Issues]

AMERICA'S "GARBAGE CRISIS": A TOXIC MYTH

Adapted from "Is Garbage an Environmental Problem?" by Patricia Poore, in the November/December 1993 issue of Garbage: The Practical Journal for the Environment. *Poore is the editor and publisher of* Garbage, *which is published in Gloucester, Massachusetts; she founded the magazine in 1989.*

Long on its recent, fortuitous journey, the *Mobro*—the infamous garbage barge that, in 1987, laden with an increasingly ripe pile of waste, wandered from port to port in search of a home. The *Mobro*, which was carrying plain old municipal solid waste—household garbage—occasioned headlines about the nation's looming "garbage crisis": we were throwing away too much, our landfills were running out of space, and soon the seas would be full of *Mobros*, all looking for a place to dump our trash. And yet here we are, seven years later, and our landfills are not overflowing; our waterways are not crowded with wandering barges. What happened to the garbage crisis?

The environmental movement continues to focus its attention on garbage and recycling, as if household garbage were the single most important issue we face and recycling the only solution. Of course, garbage does have an environmental impact; so does almost everything, from prairie-grass fires to the breath you just took. But, contrary to the rhetoric of some environmentalists, garbage is not a serious environmental hazard. True hazards are ones that threaten human lives and health. There are plenty of these, including toxic waste (which is quite distinct from household garbage), groundwater pollution, and urban smog. Compared with these real crises, the problems of municipal garbage

disposal pale. There are times and places when household garbage *can* cause environmental problems—like when toxic runoff leaches into drinking water—but these are increasingly rare. Newer landfills are double-lined, piped, vented, leachate-tested, and eventually capped. These new standards have made current American waste management safer by far than ever before.

Some critics argue that we shouldn't downplay the threat of garbage because of its symbolic value to the environmentalist agenda. Environmental organizations are well aware of the emotional power of garbage: nothing can trigger a bounteous direct-mail response or inspire a powerful grass-roots campaign like the threat of a new landfill or incineration plant. But when symbols like the *Mobro* barge are used to divert attention and money from more pressing environmental and social problems, the symbol itself becomes a threat.

If there is a garbage crisis, it is that we are treating garbage as an environmental threat and not as what it is: a manageable—though admittedly complex—civic issue. Although many old urban landfills are reaching their capacity, the reality is that there is—and always will be—plenty of room in this country for safe landfill. We've chosen to look at garbage not as a management issue, however, but as a moral crisis. The result is that recycling is now seen as an irreproachable virtue, beyond the scrutiny of cost-benefit analysis. But in the real world, the money municipalities spend on recycling is money that can't be spent on schools, libraries, health clinics, and police. In the real world, the sort of gigantic recycling programs that many cities and towns have embarked upon may not be the best use of scarce government funds.

These programs were often sold to local taxpayers as money-saving ventures. In fact, the costs associated with consumer education, separate pickup (often in newly purchased trucks), hand- and machine-sorting, transfer stations, trucking, cleaning, and reprocessing are considerably higher than initial estimates, far higher than receipts from buyers of recyclables, and, in many areas, higher than disposal costs.

Putting aside financial concerns, let's consider other justifications for the recycling-above-all-else movement. Do we need recycling to extend the life of landfills? No. Landfill sites, in fact, are not scarce, and incineration remains a reasonable and safe option. The most ambitious collection programs still leave well over half of municipal waste to be disposed of, so recycling cannot completely replace disposal facilities, even if we needed it to.

Do we need recycling to save resources? No, not in the real world. The reason recycling is

farms) or cheap and plentiful (glass from sand)

legislated mandates.

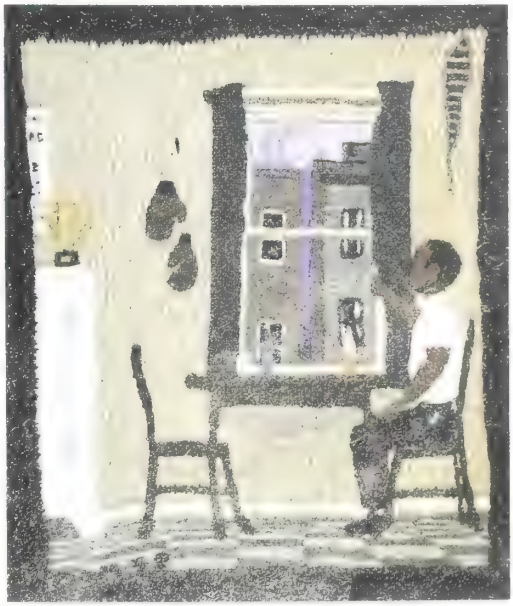
costs become

separate their trash, but they can't create industrial markets for the waste we recycle. Recycling can work, very effectively, on a region-by-region and commodity-by-commodity basis. But recycling as a government-mandated garbage-management option has largely failed.

Although the special attention we pay to garbage, to the exclusion of more serious environmental threats, may be irrational, it does make a certain emotional sense. We as individ-

[Embroidery]

A STITCH IN HARD TIME



Samuel Englehardt Matterson, an inmate at Carl Robinson Correctional Institution, in Enfield, Connecticut, [illegible] sentence for attempted robbery, kidnapping, and escaping from prison, uses thread that he unravels from socks to embroider miniature [illegible] The embroidery above is 2 1/2 inches high. Forty of Matterson's miniatures were exhibited last December at the American Primitive Gallery, in New York City.

It uses sunlight to cool you.
Air to protect you.
And it's always thinking of you.

The Mazda 929 In a category of automobile where the machine so often selfishly monopolizes the attention, there is one luxury sedan that's surprisingly sensitive to the needs of its driver. ✲ The Mazda 929. ✲ Thanks to available Solar Powered Ventilation System that helps cool the cabin while it's parked, the 929 makes you feel welcome from the moment you get in. ✲ Driver's- and passenger's-side air bags are ready to help protect you on the road. ✲ Why, it even remembers to defog the windows when you turn on the windshield wipers. ✲ Of course,



[illegible] 4-speed [illegible] 3.0L DOHC 24-valve V6 engine.

[illegible] 929 or any new Mazda, call 1-800-639-1000. © 1994 Mazda Motor of America, Inc.

the 929 also offers the unflustered performance that discerning drivers expect from a fine car. The engine, with 193 horsepower, is generous. And the suspension thoughtfully adapts to cope with the alternating demands of monotonous interstate or treacherous, serpentine

mazda

It just feels right.



a more tangible issue than, say, groundwater contamination. Nobody particularly likes garbage; nobody likes taking it out or paying to have it

trol it. Furthermore, controlling it—whether by banning plastics or sorting materials neatly at curbside—alleviates consumer guilt. "There," we say, tossing our bundled newspapers on the curb, "I've done my part for the environment."

But for all the psychological benefit that approach may confer, it is distracting us from much more pressing national problems. Trash-handling issues should be debated and decided regionally, and those decisions have to be based, at least in part, on economics. That can't happen when one option—recycling—is elevated by environmentalist rhetoric into a national moral imperative. We have real environmental problems to worry about: We have to protect the water supply. We must improve the quality of the air we breathe. We need a better plan for energy management. And we have to monitor toxic waste more effectively. In that context, it is foolish and extremely wasteful to expend so much effort wringing our hands (and spending our money) on garbage.

[Appeal]

COME FORAGE WITH US

From a letter to the editor by Linda Palter in the June 21, 1993, issue of Earth First!: The Radical Environmental Journal, *a newspaper published in Eugene, Oregon. Palter, a member of Earth First!,*

Earth First!ers are known as the activists among environmental activists, the ones who don't compromise. While others content themselves with composting and recycling, Earth First! [illegible] direct action. But being part of this society demands endless and constant compromises of my environmental ethics. Every time I use electricity, flush the toilet, or get in the car, I am knowingly contributing to the degradation of the environment.

I want to stop compromising. So I wish to propose an experiment in living authentically "in place," as humans did for 99.99 percent of our history. I want to form a small hunter-gatherer tribe, which will use only the resources within its range. Is American land still able to support a small population of omnivores as large as humans? [illegible] that, like chickens, we can no longer live in "the wild"? These are legitimate questions.

The ideal experimental group would be made up of between ten and twenty men and women of various backgrounds and ages. Some will be knowledgeable in primitive technology, some in plants and animals, some perhaps in healing. I'd suggest we have a shaman; we seem to need an earth-based spirituality to keep from degenerating into earth-rapers.

The experiment should run for at least two years. There will surely be [illegible] error learning and then a second chance to do better. We may also need an additional year of prep time to replace our manufactured tools and clothes with made-in-our-place ones.

If you are interested in joining the "tribe," please write to me.

[Letter]

A ROCK, A RIVER, A TREE / A POETIC CONTROVERSY

From a letter sent last August by Norton F. Tennille Jr., a Washington, D.C., attorney, to M. Campbell Cawood, a self-described "personal friend" of Maya Angelou's, about "On the Pulse of Morning," the poem Angelou composed for President Clinton's inauguration. Tennille had written to Angelou in January 1993 regarding "striking similarities" between her poem and "Outward Bound," a poem Tennille wrote in 1985 for the North Carolina Outward Bound School (NCOBS). Last July, after receiving no response from Angelou, Tennille wrote to Robert J. Brown, a founding member of NCOBS and a friend of Angelou's, who responded that he was sure Angelou's poem was "original," because he had "sat nearby" while she composed it. Brown then gave Tennille's letter to Cawood, who wrote Tennille that he had been "very wrong" to suggest Angelou "may have been inspired by your poem and possibly plagiarized it." The poem was written, Cawood said, "with what must have been 'Divine' inspiration."

First, let me say that I have never suggested, in my correspondence with Professor Angelou or otherwise, that she plagiarized or otherwise improperly made use of my poem "Outward Bound." Rather, I said in my letter that I would be pleased and flattered to learn that she had read "Outward Bound" and drawn on its concepts, structure, and images.



The cows pictured above were part of an exhibition that took place in Pinedale, Wyoming, last September. Local artists Pip Brant, Duane Brant, and Sue Thornton painted words on seventy cows and then let them roam around a corral. The words were taken from a journal passage written by Phyllis Luman Metal, who grew up on a ranch near Pinedale in the early 1900s. Thornton explained in a newspaper interview that the project produced "spontaneous poetry" that was a "reflection of the fragmentation that's happening in the West."

All poetry is derivative, going back to Homer, the greatest of all poets, and beyond. Indeed, the very greatness of Homer was to take a poem that had been composed and recited orally by generations of bards before him and transform it, shape it, into something universal.

As you yourself point out, Professor Angelou drew on many sources of inspiration for her poem, weaving "many aspects of our culture, literature, song, and history into a new poem." She has been quoted as saying, "I am inspired by the poetry of human beings." Can you see anything wrong with her being inspired, in part, by a contemporary poet?

That there are a number of similarities between "Outward Bound" and "On the Pulse of Morning" cannot seriously be gainsaid:

- The structure of the two poems is similar.
- "A Rock, a River, a Tree, Hosts" [Angelou's first line] sounds a lot like "Rock, rope, river, hands" [Tennille's first line]. Both poems begin and conclude with such an address, her reiteration being "The Rock, the River, the Tree, your Country."
- I wrote, "Rock, you raised against the hill a ladder for once timid feet to scale in search of a higher view." She wrote, "Today, the Rock calls out to us, clearly, forcefully, Come, you may stand upon my back and face your distant destiny."
- Both involve personifications of the Rock and the River. I personified ropes hanging from trees; she personifies the Tree. I also personified "hands"; she writes, "Women, children, men, take [the dream] into the palms of your hands."
- [illegible] aspects of nature and draw strength from them, [illegible] metaphorically. And [illegible] is the return to natural elements as a stimulus to self-discovery.
- [illegible] ends with an allusion to [illegible] morning"/"We [illegible]

[illegible] ll these similarities is, [illegible] course. "All [illegible] the fact that Professor Angelou lives [illegible] Carolina [illegible] have had occasion to see "Outward [illegible]," which has been framed and hangs in homes or offices of many North Carolina [illegible] and Bound Society trustees and friends, one [illegible] might have provided her [illegible]

nity to read it. Indeed, it now appears that Pro- [illegible] "In the Pulse of Morning" in the presence of Robert Brown, a founding trustee of the NCOBS. If he has a copy of "Outward Bound" on display (which would not be surprising), is it not possible that she has seen it, perhaps many times?

Like you, I believe in the "divine inspiration" of poetry and music. "Outward Bound" simply flowed through me, from the Creator. It may, by accident or by grace, have come to Professor Angelou's attention. If there is any debt of gratitude on Professor Angelou's part—and she has [illegible] it would be to the Creator and the North Carolina Outward Bound School, not to me.

Please let me assure you that I have no need for recognition and seek no compensation. If, however, Professor Angelou should owe any debt to the North Carolina Outward Bound School, poetic justice would appear at least to suggest, if not require, that she acknowledge it.

[Parody; Rhyme]

LITTLE MS. MUFFET

From a press release issued [illegible] by Meadowbrook Press, in Deephaven, Minnesota, to promote The New Adventures of Mother Goose, *a book of "alternative" Mother Goose rhymes by Bruce [illegible]. According to the press release, Lansky undertook the revisions because the traditional versions are "mean-spirited, sexist, and violent."*

[illegible]

Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater,
Had a wife and couldn't keep her;
He put her in a pumpkin shell
And there he kept her very well.

Message: It's all right for husbands to control their wives.

[illegible]

Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater
always wanted food much sweeter.
Adding sugar was a blunder—
now he is a toothless wonder.

[illegible]

Georgie Porgie, puddin' and pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry.
When the boys came out to play,
[illegible]

Message: Boys will be boys. Teasing girls is okay. What girls want doesn't matter.

[illegible]

Georgie Porgie, what a shame
kids call you such a silly name.
[illegible]

[Warning]

BARNEY: AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD

From "Barney: 'The Purple Messiah,'" by Dr. Joseph R. Chambers, a "sermon booklet" published last December by Paw Creek Ministries, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Barney is much more than just a fun creature of kids' imaginations. He is a politically correct teacher of everything on the liberal left's agenda, from New Age evolution to radical ecology. To many children, Barney has become a guru of sorts. He constantly teaches transcendental thought and mystical ideas. Nothing comes through Barney's teachings more clearly than the New Age idea of using our minds to create miracles. No one should deny that positive or negative thinking can tremendously affect our lives. But such powers are clearly physical and end with the normal experiences we enjoy. *God alone is supernatural.*

The idea of a seance is at the forefront of almost every Barney program. On one show, about Mother Goose rhymes, Mother Goose talks to the children from one of her books. Led by Barney, the children commune with Mother Goose and conduct a seance to bring her to them. As they sing and dance their little ditty, she—poof!—appears in their presence. The Bible calls that necromancy and says that a person who participates in such behavior is an abomination unto the Lord (Deuteronomy 18:9–12). This kind of occult activity fills the Barney material. *Conjuring someone up is certainly not kid's play!*

The book, *Just Imagine with Barney*, is also completely immersed in New Age messages. It starts with a little girl named Lori, who is crying because her family plans to move to another city. She hugs her toy Barney, her "very best friend," and says, " 'I don't want to move.' " Then the giant Barney appears amid "sparkling stardust and dancing magical colors" and says, " 'You loved me *so* much that your love made me real!' " Then he leads Lori into a world where your imagination



"Golf Club at Desert Mountain, Geronimo Course" (15th hole, par 4) [illegible] *that was on display last December at the Director's Guild in Los Angeles. Mr.* [illegible] *since 1991. He lives in Los Angeles.*

creates whatever you desire. Barney tells Lori, "'Sometimes I imagine that I can fly like a bird and . . . Zoom! Up I go! Now, you try it.'" Lori closes her eyes and imagines that she can fly, too. Then Barney says the magic words, "'Shimbaree, Shimbarah! Shimbaree, Shimbarah!'" and, "*Zoom!* Lori flew up into the air right next to Barney."

Lori is told that she can do whatever she wants with her imagination. This is exactly what is being taught through New Age techniques known as "centering," "quieting reflexes," and "guided imagery." These programs have been labeled by sensible psychologists and psychiatrists as dangerous and misleading. Guided imagery has been rejected by almost every school district in America due to protests by parents.

At the end of *Just Imagine*, Lori and Barney fly back to Lori's house. Barney disappears so that her parents won't find out about him. Lori is all bubbles and happiness. *Clearly, Barney has replaced her parents as the source of her peace of mind and stability*. This book is one of the most subtle attacks on the family that I have ever witnessed. It certainly leaves no room for the Lord Jesus Christ to be a child's best friend.

In another book, *Barney's Magical Picnic*, Barney multiplies food much like Jesus. Instead of fish and loaves of bread, Barney uses a peanut-butter sandwich; with imagination, stars, and rainbows, the sandwich becomes "magically big enough for everyone."

Barney's Campfire Sing-A-Long is a video in which Barney and the Backyard Gang go on a camping trip. Tina gets separated from the group, but she remembers that Barney told them to hug a tree if they got lost and to blow their whistles. When Tina hugs the tree, the gang suddenly hears her and returns to save her. You often see bumper stickers that read, "Have you hugged a [illegible]." [illegible] ecologist New Agers in this nation. They believe that "God is all and all is God" [illegible] consciousness and the attunement of [illegible]'s spirit.

When you mix captivating entertainment, catchy songs, and emotionally satisfying music with a message that glorifies the creator of it all, you have the makings of a cult. Barney has become the leader of a children's cult. When Barney appears, the children joyously proclaim, "When he [illegible] the way everybody's [illegible]" As society we have become more and more [illegible] wild fantasy and less and less disciplined about responsibility. We are on a mindless trip created by our unbridled imaginations. Barney is an excellent gauge of where we are headed.

[Dan Stone]

COINCIDENCE

From "The Red Notebook," in The Art of Hunger: [illegible] *and Thrift Store Reading* [illegible] *Paul Auster [illegible] new, near, and [illegible]*

In my son's nursery school, there was a little girl whose parents were going through a divorce. I particularly liked her father, B., a struggling painter who earned his living by doing architectural renderings. However gloomy things had been for him in recent years (endless money problems, lack of artistic success, threats of eviction from his landlord), he never seemed to be [illegible]

[Letter]

ONE ART CRITIC'S BURNING ISSUE

[illegible] Stumbo's letter [illegible] Nude [illegible] exhibit at the Kasten Gallery, in Seattle. The letter [illegible] gallery's Fifth Northwest Marine Art Exhibition. Stumbo's letter was reprinted in the November [illegible] Northwest Fireboat Watch.

I'm writing this letter to express my disappointment over your inclusion of the painting *Ferry Fire* [illegible] Northwest Marine Art Exhibition.

An examination of your mailed announcement makes it clear that the other artists in your exhibit are trying very hard for historical authenticity and technical accuracy. In contrast, in the painting *Ferry Fire*:

• [illegible] deck. The passenger decks of all Washington State ferry vessels contain no combustible material.

• If the smoke issuing from the overhead of the vehicle deck indicates a fire on the vehicle deck, then it should be apparent in the picture that the deluge sprinkler system [illegible] operation. It is not.



• People are shown abandoning ship by leaping over the side without life jackets. The Super Class ferries carry survival craft for 195 people; where are they? They would have been launched prior to anyone going over the side into the water. The picture shows only one boat, which is [illegible]

• Why are people abandoning ship at all? The vessel does not appear to be sinking. Normal practice would entail directing passengers to the other end of the ferry, away from the fire. Passengers who go into the water are in danger from [illegible]

[illegible] type of incident, [illegible] alarmist illustration is irresponsible and serves only to heighten unneces-

B. was exceedingly tall (six five or six six), good-looking, and gentle in his manner—qualities that made him especially attractive to women. Once his divorce was behind him and he began to circulate again, he had no trouble finding female companions. I saw him only about two or three times a year, but each time I did, there was another woman in his life. All of them were obviously mad for him. You had only to watch them looking at B. to know how they felt, but for one reason or another none of these affairs lasted very long.

After two or three years B.'s landlord finally made good on his threats and evicted him from his loft. B. moved out of the city, and I lost touch with him.

Several more years went by, and then one night B. came back to town to attend a dinner party. My wife and I were also there, and since we had heard that B. was about to get married, we asked him to tell us the story of how he had met his future wife.

About six months earlier, he said, he had been talking to a friend on the phone. This friend was worried about him, and after a while he began to scold B. for not having married again. You've been divorced for seven years now, he said, and in that time you could have settled down with any one of a dozen attractive and remarkable women. But no one is ever good enough for you, and you've turned them all away. What's wrong with you, B.? What in the world do you want?

There's nothing wrong with me, B. said. I just haven't found the right person, that's all.

At the rate you're going, you never will, the friend answered. I mean, have you ever met one woman who comes close to what you're looking for? Name one. I dare you to name just one.

Startled by his friend's vehemence, B. paused to consider the question carefully. Yes, he finally said, there was one. A woman by the name of E., whom he had known as a student at Harvard more than twenty years ago. But she had been involved with another man at the time, and he had been involved with another woman (his future ex-wife), and nothing had developed between them. He had no idea where E. was now, he said, but if he could meet someone like her, he knew he wouldn't hesitate to get married again.

That was the end of the conversation. Until mentioning her to his friend, B. hadn't thought about this woman in more than ten years, but now that she had resurfaced in his mind, he had trouble thinking about anything else. For the next three or four days, he thought about her constantly, unable to shake the feeling that his one chance for happiness had been lost many years ago. Then, almost as if the intensity of these thoughts had sent a signal out into the world, the phone rang one night, and there was

E. on the other end of the line.

B. kept her on the phone for more than three hours. After graduating from college, E. had joined a dance company, and for the past twenty years she had devoted herself exclusively to her career. She had never married, and now that she was about to retire as a performer, she was calling old friends from her past, trying to make contact with the world again.

B. arranged to see her the next night. Once they were together, it didn't take long for him to discover that his feelings for her were just as strong as he had imagined. He fell in love with her all over again, and several weeks later they were engaged to be married.

To make the story even more perfect, it turned out that E. was independently wealthy. Her aunts had been rich, and after they died she had inherited all their money—which meant that not only had B. found true love but the crushing money problems that had plagued him for so many years had suddenly vanished.

All in one fell swoop.

•

My first novel was inspired by a wrong number. I was alone in my apartment in Brooklyn one afternoon, sitting at my desk and trying to work, when the telephone rang. If I am not mistaken, it was the spring of 1980.

I picked up the receiver, and the man on the other end asked if he was talking to the Pinkerton Agency. I told him no, he had dialed the wrong number, and hung up. Then I went back to work and promptly forgot about the call.

The next afternoon, the telephone rang again. It turned out to be the same person asking the same question I had been asked the day before: "Is this the Pinkerton Agency?" Again I said no, and again I hung up. This time, however, I started thinking about what would have happened if I had said yes. What if I had pretended to be a detective from the Pinkerton Agency? I wondered. What if I had actually taken on the case?

To tell the truth, I felt that I had squandered a rare opportunity. If the man ever called again, I told myself, I would at least talk to him a little bit and try to find out what was going on. I waited for the telephone to ring again, but the third call never came.

After that, wheels started turning in my head, and little by little an entire world of possibilities opened up to me. When I sat down to write *City of Glass* a year later, the wrong number had been transformed into the crucial event of the book, the mistake that sets the whole story in motion. A man named Quinn receives a phone call from someone who wants to talk to Paul Auster, the private detective. Just as I did, Quinn tells the caller he has dialed the wrong number. It happens

All well and good. I finished the book ten

possible for stories to go on writing themselves

I was alone

ting at my desk and trying to work, when the telephone rang. This was a different apartment from the one I had in 1980 a different apartment with a different telephone number. I picked up the receiver, and the man on the other end asked if he could speak to Mr. Quinn. He had a Spanish accent, and I did not recognize the voice. For a moment I thought it might be one of my friends trying to pull my leg. "Mr. Quinn?" I said. "Is this some kind of a joke, or what?"

No, it wasn't a joke. The man was in dead earnest. He had to talk to Mr. Quinn, and would I please put him on the line. Just to make sure, I asked him to spell the name. The caller's accent was quite thick, and I was hoping that he wanted to talk to Mr. Queen. But no such luck. "Q-U-I-N-N," the man answered. I suddenly grew scared, and for a moment or two I couldn't get any words out of my mouth. "I'm sorry," I said at last, "there's no Mr. Quinn here. You've dialed the wrong number." The man apologized for disturbing me, and then we both hung up.

This really happened. Like everything else I have set down in this red notebook, it is a true story.



From The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

THE GREAT CHAIN

Watched me count the handicaps
In her firstborn until I froze
Like four legs in the headlights.
An accident, the doctor had
Told her, too little air, citing
The brief thesaurus of cause.
I nodded like someone saying
His job in an office of lies:
Her son crawled like he'd lighted
On the huge, invisible web
Of God. "My sister's boy has
A problem, too," she murmured.
"Both of us are moving closer
To cities so this never
Happens again." Too little air
In Pennsylvania, in Georgia.
Too little air in the room
Where we stared from one boy to
The other, so quiet, so long,
We might have been practicing
Conservation, as if that room
Had been sealed by landslide, and
We were finding the essential,
Slow rhythms of survival.

In health class, eighth grade, we learned
The descending categories

Made a mark, than idiot.

n laughed and laughed

He take his ruler to bed? we asked.
He wanted to see how long he slept;
And he wanted, joke by joke,
To bring the dead metaphors
To life—time, butter, and fire
Flying out his busy window.

"That will do," our teachers said.
"Three generations of imbeciles
Are enough," the Chief Justice said,
In 1927, supporting
The Eugenics Record Office,
Which wanted to sterilize everyone
Deemed unfit. Harry Laughlin,
Superintendent, hoped to eliminate,
In two generations, the submerged tenth
Of our population. He meant the blind,
The deaf, the orphans, and the homeless
He meant the poor and the stupid,
And the Supreme Court backed him up,
Finding a "clear and present danger"
In the family tree of the Bucks—
Who were illegitimate and poor;
Who were Emma, Carrie, and Vivian;
Who made enough of these morons,
Declared deficient at seven months
After this expert testimony:
"There is a look about the baby
That is not quite normal, but
What it is I can't quite tell."

None of the Bucks, it turned out,
Was a moron like the one who took
His ladder to church for High Mass,
But Carrie's sister was sterilized,
Too, for good measure, and here is
The rest of the little moron's story:
He climbed and sat on top
Of his stepladder. He looked down
At the priest, who looked down
On the congregation, who were all
Looking down together. And looking
Down from the stepladder of research,
I can repeat the rosary
Of heredity, say Fragile X,
The syndrome which chains my cousins,
Their three imbecile boys, one
Generation enough, in this case,
For a chromosome passed down
Like a family job. That I'm
My mother's exception, in theory;
That my sister, who carries,
In theory, has no children.
That Vivian Buck managed
The honor roll in grade school
The year before she died. That chance
Blows the finest glass from this
Illusionist furnace, my gifted sons
Taking, like their father, those

ON NOT BEING A VICTIM

Sex, rape, and the trouble with following rules

By Mary Gaitskill

In the early 1970's I had an experience that could be described as acquaintance rape. Actually I have had two or three such experiences, but the one I am going to tell you about is the one I was sixteen and staying in the apartment of a slightly older girl I'd just met in a seedy community center in Detroit. I'd been in her apartment for a few days when an older guy she knew came over and suggested that we all drop some acid. In those years, doing acid with complete strangers was consistent with my idea of a possible good time, so I said yes. When I started peaking, my hostess left, leaving me alone with the guy who, I clearly, was [illegible]. I was, alone with this guy who, I clearly, was [illegible].

He seemed to be coming on to me, but I wasn't sure. My perception was quite loopy, and on top of that he was black and urban-poor, which meant that I, being very inexperienced and ideal[illegible] read him the way I might have read a [illegible] with conversation, but it was hard, considering that I was having trouble with logical sentence [illegible]. I [illegible] him what he was thinking. Avoiding my eyes, he answered, "That if I wasn't such a nice guy you could really be getting screwed." The remark sounded to me like a threat, albeit a low-key one. But instead of asking him to explain himself or to leave [illegible] he put his hand on my [illegible] not face the idea that if I said no, things might get ugly. I don't think he had any idea how unwilling [illegible] and I suppose he may have [illegible] and don't look at me much. M[illegible] tleness, he was the only [illegible] I didn't understand, broke my heart. Even as inexperienced as I was, I

Mary Gaitskill's [illegible]
Two Girls, Fat and Thin

MAYBE I WASN'T RAPED, BUT I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD THAT IN FAILING EVEN TO TRY TO SPEAK UP ON MY OWN BEHALF, I HAD, IN A SENSE, RAPED MYSELF

sensed that in his own way he intended a romantic encounter.

For some time afterward I described this event as "the time I was raped." I knew when I said it that the statement wasn't quite accurate, that I hadn't, after all, said no. Yet it *felt* accurate to me. In spite of my ambiguous, even empathic feelings for my unchosen partner, unwanted sex on acid is a nightmare, and I did feel violated by the experience. At times I even flat-out lied about what had happened, grossly exaggerating the violence and the threat—not out of shame or guilt, but because the pumped-up version was more congruent with my feelings of violation than the confusing facts. Every now and then, in the middle of telling an exaggerated version of the story, I would remember the actual man and internally pause, uncertain of how the memory squared with what I was saying or where my sense of violation was coming from—and then I would continue with my story. I am ashamed to admit this, both because it is embarrassing to me and because I am afraid the admission could be taken as evidence that women lie "to get revenge." I want to stress that I would not have lied that way in court or in any other context that might have had practical consequences; it didn't even occur to me to take my case to court. My lies were told not for revenge but in service of what I felt to be the metaphorical truth.

I remember my experience in Detroit, including its aftermath, every time I hear or read yet another discussion of what constitutes "date rape." I remember it when yet another critic castigates "victimism" and complains that everyone imagines himself or herself to be a victim and that no one accepts responsibility anymore. I could imagine telling my story as a verification that rape occurs by subtle threat as well as by overt force. I could also imagine telling it as if I were one of those crybabies who want to feel like victims. Both stories would be true and not true. The complete truth is more complicated than most of the intellectuals who have written scolding essays on victimism seem willing to accept. I didn't understand my own story fully until I described it to an older woman many years later, as a proof of the unreliability of feelings. "Oh, I think your feelings were reliable," she returned. "It sounds like you were raped. It sounds like you raped yourself." I immediately knew that what she said was true, that in failing even to try to speak up for myself, I had, in a sense, raped myself.



I don't say this in a tone of self-recrimination. I was in a difficult situation: I was very young, and he was aggressive. But my inability to speak for myself—to *stand up* for myself—had little to do with those facts. I was unable to stand up for myself because I had never been taught how.

When I was growing up in the 1960s, I was taught by the adult world that good girls never had sex and bad girls did. This rule had clarity going for it but little else; as it was presented to me, it allowed no room for what I actually might feel, what I might want or not want. Within the confines of this rule, I didn't count for much, and I quite vigorously rejected it. Then came the less clear "rules" of cultural trend and peer example that said that if you were cool you wanted to have sex as much as possible with as many people as possible. This message was never stated as a rule, but, considering how absolutely it was woven into the social etiquette of the day (at least in the circles I cared about), it may as well have been. It suited me better than the adults' rule—it allowed me my sexuality, at least—but again it didn't take into account what I might actually want or not want.

The encounter in Detroit, however, had nothing to do with being good or bad, cool or uncool. It was about someone wanting something I didn't want.

Since I had been taught only how to follow rules that were
important than I was, I didn't know what to do in a situation where
obtained and that required me to speak up on my own behalf. I had never
been taught that my behalf mattered. And so I felt helpless, even victim-
ized, without really knowing why.

My parents and my teachers believed that social rules
me and that adhering to these rules constituted social responsibility. Ironically, my parents did exactly what many commentators recommend as a remedy for victimism. They told me they loved me and that I mattered a lot, but this was not the message I got from the way they conducted themselves in relation to authority and social convention—which was not only that I didn't matter but that *they* didn't matter. In this, they were typical of other adults I knew as well as of the culture around them. When I began to have trouble in school, both socially and academically, a counselor exhorted me to "just play the game"—meaning to go along with everything from school policy to the adolescent pecking order—regardless of what I thought of "the game." My aunt, with whom I lived for a short while, actually burned my jeans and T-shirts because they violated what she understood to be the standards of decorum. A close friend of mine lived in a state of war with her father because of her hippie clothes and hair—which were, of course, de rigueur among her peers. Upon discovering that she was smoking pot, he had her institutionalized.

Many middle-class people—both men and women—were brought up, like I was, to equate responsibility with obeying external rules. And when the rules no longer work, they don't know what to do—much like the enraged, gun-wielding protagonist of the movie *Falling Down*, played by Michael Douglas, who ends his ridiculous trajectory by helplessly declaring, "I did everything they told me to." If I had been brought up to reach my own conclusions about which rules were congruent with my internal experience of the world, those rules would have had more meaning for me. Instead, I was usually given a series of static pronouncements. For example, when I was thirteen, I was told by my mother that I couldn't wear a short skirt because "nice girls don't wear skirts above the knee." I countered, of course, by saying that my friend Patty wore skirts above the knee. "Patty is not a nice girl," returned my mother. But Patty *was* nice. My mother is a very intelligent and sensitive person, but it didn't occur to her to define for me what she meant by "nice," what "nice" had to do with skirt length, and how the two definitions might relate to what I had observed to be nice or not nice—and then let me decide for myself. It's true that most thirteen-year-olds aren't interested in, or much capable of, philosophical discourse, but that doesn't mean that adults can't explain themselves more completely to children. Part of becoming responsible is learning how to make a choice about where you stand in respect to the social code and then holding yourself accountable for your choice. In contrast, many children who grew up in my milieu were given abstract absolutes that were placed before us as if our thoughts, feelings, and observations were irrelevant.

Recently I heard a panel of feminists on talk radio advocating that laws be passed prohibiting men from touching or making sexual comments to women on the street. Listeners called in to express reactions both pro and con, but the one I remember was a woman who said, "If a man touches me and I don't want it, I don't need a law. I'm gonna beat the hell out of him." The panelists were silent. Then one of them responded in an uncertain voice, "I guess I just never learned how to do that." I understood that the feminist might not want to get into a fistfight with a man likely to be a lot bigger than she, but if her self-respect was so easily shaken by an obscene comment made by some slob on the street, I wondered, how did she expect to get through life? She was exactly the kind of woman whom the cultural critics Camille Paglia and Katie Roiphe have derided as

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BROUGHT UP LIKE I WAS
KNOW WHAT TO DO

THE ACCUSATORY AND PAINFULLY EMOTIONAL RHETORIC SURROUNDING DATE RAPE IS AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE NEW RULES AND CODIFY SEXUAL EXPERIENCE

"rape-crisis feminist"—puritans, sissies, closet-Victorian ladies who want to legislate the ambiguity out of sex. It was very easy for me to feel self-righteous, and I muttered sarcastically at my radio as the panel yammered about self-esteem.

I was conflicted, however. If there had been a time in my own life when I couldn't stand up for myself, how could I expect other people to do it? It could be argued that the grown women on the panel should be more capable than a sixteen-year-old girl whacked out on acid. But such a notion presupposes that people develop at a predictable rate or react to circumstances by coming to universally agreed-upon conclusions. This is the crucial unspoken presumption at the center of the date-rape debate as well as of the larger discourse on victimism. It is a presumption that in a broad but potent sense reminds me of a rule.

Feminists who postulate that boys must obtain a spelled-out "yes" before having sex are trying to establish rules, cut in stone, that will apply to any and every encounter and that every responsible person must obey. The new rule resembles the old good girl/bad girl rule not only because of its implicit suggestion that girls have to be protected but also because of its absolute nature, its iron-fisted denial of complexity and ambiguity. I bristle at such a rule and so do a lot of other people. But should we really be so puzzled and indignant that another rule has been presented? If people have been brought up believing that to be responsible is to obey certain rules, what are they going to do with a can of worms like "date rape" except try to make new rules that they see as more fair or useful than the old ones?

But the "rape-crisis feminists" are not the only absolutists here; their critics play the same game. Camille Paglia, author of *Sexual Personae*, has stated repeatedly that any girl who goes alone into a frat house and proceeds to tank up is cruising for a gang bang, and if she doesn't know that, well, then she's "an idiot." The remark is most striking not for its crude unkindness but for its reductive solipsism. It assumes that all college girls have had the same life experiences as Paglia, and have come to the same conclusions about them. By the time I got to college, I'd been living away from home for years and had been around the block several times. I never went to a frat house, but I got involved with men who lived in rowdy "boy houses" reeking of dirty socks and rock and roll. I would go over, drink, and spend the night with my lover of the moment; it never occurred to me that I was in danger of being gang-raped, and if I had been, I would have been shocked and badly hurt. My experience, though some of it had been bad, hadn't led me to conclude that boys plus alcohol equals gang bang, and I was not naive or idiotic. Katie Roiphe, author of *The Morning After: Fear, Sex, and Feminism on Campus*, criticizes girls who, in her view, create a myth of false innocence: "But did these twentieth-century girls, raised on Madonna videos and the six o'clock news, really trust that people were good until they themselves were raped? Maybe. Were these girls, raised on horror movies and glossy Hollywood sex scenes, really as innocent as all that?" I am sympathetic to Roiphe's annoyance, but I'm surprised that a smart chick like her apparently doesn't know that people process information and imagery (like Madonna videos and the news) with a complex subjectivity that doesn't in any predictable way alter their ideas about what they can expect from life.

Roiphe and Paglia are not exactly invoking rules, but their comments seem to derive from a belief that everyone except idiots interprets information and experience in the same way. In that sense, they are not so different in attitude from those ladies dedicated to establishing feminist-based rules and regulations for sex. Such rules, just like the old rules, assume a certain psychological uniformity of experience, a right way.

The accusatory and sometimes painfully emotional rhetoric conceals an attempt not only to make new rules but also to codify experience. The "rape-crisis feminists" obviously speak for many women and girls who have been raped or have *felt* raped in a wide variety of circumstances. They

would not get so much play if they were not addressing a [illegible] real experience of violation and hurt. By asking, "Were they really so innocent?" Roiphe doubts the veracity of the experience she presumes to address because it doesn't square with hers or with that of her friends. Having not felt violated herself—even though she says she has had [illegible] that many would now call date rape—she cannot understand, or even quite believe, that anyone else would feel violated in similar circumstances. She therefore believes all the fuss to be a political ploy or, worse, a retrograde desire to return to crippling ideals of helpless femininity. In turn, Roiphe's detractors, who have not had her more sanguine "morning after" experience, believe her to be ignorant and callous, or a secret rape victim in deep denial. Both camps, believing their own experience to be the truth, seem unwilling to acknowledge the emotional truth on the other side.

It is at this point that the "date-rape debate" resembles the bigger debate about how and why Americans seem so eager to identify themselves and be identified by others as victims. Book after article has appeared, written in baffled yet hectoring language, deriding the P.C. goody-goodies who want to play victim and the spoiled, self-centered fools who attend twelve-step programs, meditate on their inner child, and study pious self-help books. The revisionist critics have all had a lot of fun with the recovery movement, getting into high dudgeon over those materially well-off people who describe their childhoods as "holocausts" and winding up with a fierce exhortation to return to rationality. Rarely do such critics make any but the most superficial attempt to understand why the population might behave thus.

In a fussing, fuming essay in these pages ("Victims, All?" October 1991) that has almost become a prototype of the genre, David Rieff expressed his outrage and bewilderment that affluent people would feel hurt and disappointed by life. He angrily contrasted rich Americans obsessed with their inner children to Third World parents concerned with feeding their actual children. On the most obvious level, the contrast is one that needs to be made, but I question Rieff's idea that suffering is one definable thing, that he knows what it is, and that since certain kinds of emotional pain don't fit this definition they can't really exist. This idea doesn't allow him to have much respect for other people's experience—or even to see it. It may be ridiculous and perversely self-aggrandizing for most people to describe whatever was bad about their childhood as a "holocaust," but I suspect that when people talk like that they are saying that as children they were not given enough of what they would later need in order to know who they are or to live truly responsible lives. Thus they find themselves in a state of bewildering loss that they can't articulate, except by wild exaggeration—much like I defined my inexplicable feelings after my Detroit episode. "Holocaust" may be a grossly inappropriate exaggeration. But to speak in exaggerated metaphors about psychic injury is not so much the act of a crybaby as it is a distorted attempt to explain one's own experience. I think the distortion comes from a desperate desire to make one's experience have consequence in the eyes of others, and that such desperation comes from a crushing doubt that one's own experience counts at all.



In her book *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional*, Wendy Kaminer speaks harshly of women in some twelve-step programs who talk about being metaphorically raped. "It is an article of faith here that suffering is relative; no one says she'd rather be raped metaphorically than in fact," she writes, as if not even a crazy person would prefer a literal rape to a metaphorical one. But actually, I might. About two years after my "rape" in Detroit, I was raped for real. The experience was terrifying: my attacker repeatedly

Drs. Junkins, Kwiatkowski, Cuervo, and Huang haven't been doctors long enough to know they're supposed to drive one of those overpriced luxury imports.

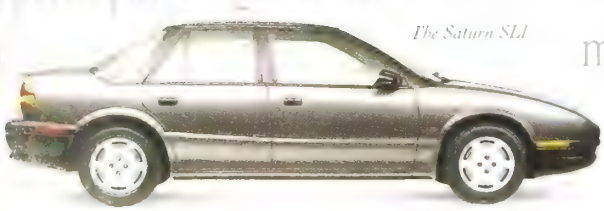
Drs. Janet, Beth, and Jim emerged, successfully, from [illegible] they felt the gratification of having achieved a lifelong [illegible] also confronting a hard reality common to most young [illegible]—a ton of student loan debt. (You could buy five Saturns with what a new M.D. typically owes.)



In Ed's case, that hard reality also included his [illegible]-year-old car—nobody could tell him how much time it had left. Since a pediatric resident's life is ruled by a beeper (and because you can't tell a sick kid that the tow truck's stuck), Ed bit the bullet and went looking for a new car.

While he was making the rounds of the car dealerships in town, Ed discovered Saturn. There, along with the simple, painless way one shops at our showrooms, he liked the rather healthy range of standard features offered and (especially) the fact that the price of a Saturn did not put him in a state of shock.

Based mostly on his referral, many of Ed's colleagues have [illegible] the hospital parking lot with new Saturns. (Apparently, they pay most attention to a [illegible] other doctors.)



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The Doctors are pictured with a 1995 Saturn SL1. M.S.R.P. as of 1994 Saturn SL1 is $10,850, including retailer prep and optional passenger-side mirror. Tax, license, transportation.



I WAS A CRITICAL FEMINIST
BEFORE THE TERM EXISTED, AND
NOW I SEE THAT MY CRITICAL
RIGIDITY FOLLOWED FROM
MY INABILITY TO ACKNOWLEDGE
MY OWN FEELINGS

said he was going to kill me, and I thought he might. The terror was acute, but after it was over it actually affected me less than many other mundane instances of emotional brutality I've suffered or seen other people suffer. Frankly, I've been scarred more by experiences I had on the playground in elementary school. I realize that the observation may seem bizarre, but for me the rape was a clearly defined act, perpetrated upon me by a crazy asshole whom I didn't know or trust; it had nothing to do with me or who I was, and so, when it was over, it was relatively easy to dismiss. Emotional cruelty is more complicated. Its motives are often impossible to understand, and it is sometimes committed by people who say they like or even love you. Nearly always it's hard to know whether you played a role in what happened, and, if so, what the role was. The experience *sticks* to you. By the time I was raped I had seen enough emotional cruelty to feel that the rape, although bad, was not especially traumatic.

My response may seem strange to some, but my point is that pain can be an experience that defies codification. If thousands of Americans say that they are in psychic pain, I would not be so quick to write them off as self-indulgent fools. A metaphor like "the inner child" may be silly and schematic, but it has a fluid subjectivity, especially when projected out into the world by such a populist notion as "recovery." Ubiquitous recovery-movement phrases like "We're all victims" and "We're all co-dependent" may not seem to leave a lot of room for interpretation, but they are actually so vague that they beg for interpretation and projection. Such phrases may be fair game for ridicule, but it is shallow to judge them on their face value, as if they hold the same meaning for everyone. What is meant by an "inner child" depends on the person speaking, and not everyone will see it as a metaphor for helplessness. I suspect that most inner-child enthusiasts use the image of themselves as children not so that they can *avoid* being responsible but to learn responsibility by going back to the point in time when they *should* have been taught responsibility—the ability to think, choose, and stand up for themselves—and were not. As I understand it, the point of identifying an "inner child" is to locate the part of yourself that didn't develop into adulthood and then to develop it yourself. Whether or not this works is an open question, but it is an attempt to accept responsibility, not to flee it.



When I was in my late teens and early twenties, I could not bear to watch movies or read books that I considered demeaning to women in any way; I evaluated everything I saw or read in terms of whether it expressed a "positive image" of women. I was a very P.C. feminist before the term existed, and, by the measure of my current understanding, my critical rigidity followed from my inability to be responsible for my own feelings. In this context, being responsible would have meant that I let myself feel whatever discomfort, indignation, or disgust I experienced without allowing those feelings to determine my entire reaction to a given piece of work. In other words, it would have meant dealing with my feelings and what had caused them, rather than expecting the outside world to assuage them. I could have chosen not to see the world through the lens of my personal unhappiness and yet maintained a kind of respect for my unhappiness. For example, I could have decided to avoid certain films or books because of my feelings without blaming the film or book for making me feel the way I did.

My emotional irresponsibility did not spring from a need to feel victimized, although it may have looked that way to somebody else. I essentially was doing what I had seen most mainstream cultural critics do—it

...as from them that I learned to view works of art, to ...
hey imparted and, further, that the message could be judged on the ba...
is of consensual ideas about what life is, and how it ...
My ideas, like most P.C. ideas, were extreme, but they were consistent with more mainstream thought—they just shifted the ... a bit.

Things haven't changed much: at least half the book and film reviews that I read praise or condemn a work on the basis of the likability of the characters (as if there is a standard idea of what is likable), or ... author's point of view is or is not "life affirming" ... or what ... ic believes the correct attitude toward life to be. The lengthy and rather hysterical debate about the film *Thelma and Louise*, in which two ordinary women become outlaws after one of them shoots the other's rapist, was predicated on the idea that stories are supposed to function ... manuals, and that whether the film was good or bad depended on whether the instructions were correct. Such criticism assumes that viewers or readers need to see a certain type of moral universe reflected back at them or, empty vessels that they are, they might get confused or depressed or something. A respected mainstream essayist writing for *Time* faulted my novel *Two Girls, Fat and Thin* for its nasty male characters, which he took to be a moral statement about males generally. He ended his piece with the fervent wish that fiction not "diminish" men or women but rather seek to "raise our vision of" both—in other words, that it should present the "right" way to the reader, who is apparently not responsible enough to figure it out alone.

I have changed a lot from the P.C. teenager who walked out of movies that portrayed women in a demeaning light. As I've grown older, I've become more confident of myself and my ability to determine what happens to me, and, as a result, those images no longer have such a strong emotional charge. I don't believe they will affect my life in any practical sense unless I allow them to do so. I no longer feel that misogynistic stories are about me or even about women (whether they purport to be or not) but rather are about the kinds of experience the authors wish to render—and therefore are not my problem. I consider my current view more balanced, but that doesn't mean my earlier feelings were wrong. The reason I couldn't watch "disrespect to women" at that time was that such depictions were too close to my own experience (most of which was not unusual), and I found them painful. I was displaying a simplistic self-respect by not subjecting myself to something I was not ready to face. Being unable to separate my personal experience from what I saw on the screen, I was not dealing with my own particular experience—I think, paradoxically, because I hadn't yet learned to value it. It's hard to be responsible for something that isn't valuable. Someone criticizing me as dogmatic and narrow-minded would have had a point, but the point would have ignored the truth of my unacknowledged experience, and thus ignored me.

Many critics of the self-help culture argue against treating emotional or metaphoric reality as if it were equivalent to objective reality. I agree that they are not the same. But emotional truth is often bound up with truth of a more objective kind and must be taken into account. This is especially true of conundrums such as date rape and victimism, both of which often are discussed in terms of unspoken assumptions about emotional truth anyway. Sarah Crichton, in a cover story for *Newsweek* on "Sexual Correctness," described the "strange detour" taken by some feminists and suggested that "we're not creating a society of Angry Young Women. These are Scared Little Girls." The comment is both contemptuous and superficial; it shows no interest in *why* girls might be scared. By such logic, anger implicitly is deemed to be the more desirable emotional state because it appears more potent, and "scared" is used as a pejorative. It's possible to shame a person into hiding his or her fear, but if you don't address the cause of the fear, it won't go away. Crichton ends her piece by saying, "Those who are growing up in envi...

I LOOKED HIM IN THE EYES AND SAID, "IF THIS COMES TO A FIGHT YOU WOULD WIN, BUT IT WOULD BE VERY UGLY FOR BOTH OF US. IS THAT REALLY WHAT YOU WANT?"

ronments where they don't have to figure out what the rules should be, but need only follow what's been prescribed, are being robbed of the most important lesson there is to learn. And that's how to live." I couldn't agree more. But unless you've been taught how to think for yourself, you'll have a hard time figuring out your own rules, and you'll feel scared—especially when there is real danger of sexual assault.

One reason I had sex with strangers when I didn't really want to was that part of me wanted the adventure, and that tougher part ran roughshod over the part of me that was scared and uncertain. I'll bet the same thing happened to many of the boys with whom I had these experiences. All people have their tough, aggressive selves as well as their more delicate selves. If you haven't developed these characteristics in ways that are respectful of yourself and others, you will find it hard to be responsible for them. I don't think it's possible to develop yourself in such ways if you are attuned to following rules and codes that don't give your inner world enough importance. I was a strong-willed child with a lot of aggressive impulses, which, for various reasons, I was actively discouraged from developing. They stayed hidden under a surface of extreme passivity, and when they did appear it was often in a wildly irresponsible, almost crazy way. My early attraction to aggressive boys and men was in part a need to see *somebody* act out the distorted feelings I didn't know what to do with, whether it was destructive or not. I suspect that boys who treat girls with disrespectful aggression have failed to develop their more tender, sensitive side and futilely try to regain it by "possessing" a woman. Lists of instructions about what's nice and what isn't will not help people in such a muddled state, and it's my observation that many people are in such a state to a greater or lesser degree.

I am not idealistic enough to hope that we will ever live in a world without rape and other forms of sexual cruelty; I think men and women will always have to struggle to behave responsibly. But I think we could make the struggle less difficult by changing the way we teach responsibility and social conduct. To teach a boy that rape is "bad" is not as effective as making him see that rape is a violation of his own masculine dignity as well as a violation of the raped woman. It's true that children don't know big words and that teenage boys aren't all that interested in their own dignity. But these are things that children learn more easily by example than by words, and learning by example runs deep.

A few years ago I invited to dinner at my home a man I'd known casually for two years. We'd had dinner and comradely drinks a few times. I didn't have any intention of becoming sexual with him, but after dinner we slowly got drunk and were soon floundering on the couch. I was ambivalent not only because I was drunk but because I realized that although part of me was up for it, the rest of me was not. So I began to say no. He parried each "no" with charming banter and became more aggressive. I went along with it for a time because I was amused and even somewhat seduced by the sweet, junior-high spirit of his manner. But at some point I began to be alarmed, and then he did and said some things that turned my alarm into fright. I don't remember the exact sequence of words or events, but I do remember taking one of his hands in both of mine, looking him in the eyes, and saying, "If this comes to a fight you would win, but it would be very ugly for both of us. Is that really what you want?"

His expression changed and he dropped his eyes; shortly afterward he left.

I consider that small decision to have been a responsible one because it was made by taking both my vulnerable feelings and my carnal impulses into account. When I spoke, my words came from my feeling of delicacy as well as from my capacity for aggression. And I respected my friend as well by addressing both sides of his nature. It is not hard for me to make such decisions now, but it took me a long time to get to this point. I only regret that it took so long, both for my young self and for the boys I was with, under circumstances that I now consider disrespectful to all concerned. ■

THE BEAR IN THE CAUCASUS

From Georgian chaos, Russian order

By Misha Glenny

Tears running down her face, an aged woman emerged from her small house and cried for help. "Please, help. Please, they will kill me," she begged, referring to the looters she had discovered inside. The crack team of Mkhedrioni, or Horsemen, the Georgian government's notorious paramilitary force, needed no encouragement. Sporting fatigues, balaclavas, and dark glasses, five of them bolted into the house. Two minutes later they reappeared, dragging with them a balding man in his forties and a thirty-year-old with only three visible teeth.



As the elder man protested his innocence, the Mkhedrioni kicked and beat him. Then they set upon the younger man.

"You filthy Zviadist scum," one of them screamed, referring to Georgia's deposed president, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, whose rebel forces, battling for control of the country, had just abandoned the town of Zugdidi, their stronghold in western Georgia. "We'll show you what we do with criminals and looters!" This said, the two were hurled onto the ground to join seven other shaken captives.

No further ceremony was required. According to a recent emergency decree issued by Georgia's leader, former Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze, looters could be executed on the spot. Nine bullets for nine criminals: quick, simple, and nasty.

Surrounded by his bodyguards, shivering in the cold, Shevardnadze himself watched as the men were shot. He had spent much of Georgia's bizarre civil war on the front line and thus had witnessed innumerable scenes of carnage, but as the looters breathed their last, he looked troubled. Standing beside him in the cold grinned a latter-day Mephistopheles — Jaba Ioseliani, the founder and leader of the Mkhedrioni. In order to win the war against Gamsakhurdia, Shevardnadze has had no choice but to rely on Ioseliani's hardened troops. The leader of the Mkhedrioni is, indisputably, a brutal fellow. A sport-mad ex-Stalinist man, he has spent seventeen years in Soviet jails for armed robbery and, it is rumored, rape and murder. In May of last year, Shevardnadze tried to break his contract with Ioseliani by an[illegible] in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi, [illegible] disbanding [illegible] Ioseliani, a member of parliament, merely laughed in reply, but two hours later he and his Horsemen began pitching tents on the steps of Tbilisi's opulent opera house. For good measure, he deployed some armed personnel carriers and tanks. The message was not lost on Shevardnadze. In another two hours he was pleading with Ioseliani to return to parliament. The order to disband the Mkhedrioni was rescinded.

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Photograph by Mikolaj Latuszewski



BURNING RUIN OF

On that cold day last October when the town of Zugdidi fell, however, Shevardnadze must have thought his alliance with Ioseliani to be worth the discomfort of watching an execution. Zugdidi was Gamsakhurdia's final stand, and its fall appeared to end his career. (And, as it turned out, this was true; in January, it was reported that Gamsakhurdia was dead.) The battle for Zugdidi also marked the Georgian government's first military success since the republic had declared itself independent of the Soviet Union in April 1991 and quickly fallen into chaos. Now Shevardnadze finally had some breathing room. The larger question for the Georgian leader, however, had to do with another Faustian alliance, with other soldiers not so far away—the Russians.

I had traveled to western Georgia to see for myself how the country was faring in its attempt to pull itself out of the civil war that had followed Gamsakhurdia's election as president in May 1991; he had won 87 percent of the vote, on a platform of messianic nationalism. A philologist and political prisoner in the Soviet era, Gamsakhurdia demanded "Georgia for the Georgians." He propounded a pseudo-scientific theory of Georgia's historical role as a mediator between the civilizations of the Orient and the Occident as well as a vision of a privatized Georgian economy linked to the West. The appetite of Georgian citizens for such rhetoric was understandable: Georgia's sovereignty has been defined largely by Russian imperial interests since the early 1800s. Soon after his election, Gamsakhurdia started driving out the Russians. The result was not merely that the economy ceased to function; the country began to split into its constituent parts. In addition to the Russians, there are four large minority groups in Georgia: the Ossetians, the Armenians, the Abkhazians, and the Azeris. And in Ajaria, in the southwest, there are Georgians who profess Islam. The minute the Russians relinquished their role of imperial mother figure, relations between the dominant Georgians and their minorities deteriorated. The situation was not enhanced by Gamsakhurdia's dictatorial behavior, which included shutting down opposition newspapers and ordering troops to fire on demonstrators. He frittered away his popularity, and within six months of his election the country fell into armed strife between the Georgians and the various minorities—a war that had two theaters of conflict. In the same period, Gamsakhurdia was challenged by Ioseliani and others. After he was ousted, Gamsakhurdia fled the capital, yet continued to draw strength from his supporters in western Georgia and from mercenaries. Shevardnadze was subsequently invited by the Georgian parliament to assume the power of the

Photograph by Patrick Robert / Sygma

president, although his official title is chairman of the parliament.

I had been on Shevardnadze's trail for several days, traveling by car across the flat, narrow valley squeezed between the majesty of the northern and southern Caucasus mountain ranges. The front line of the battle had been swinging back and forth along the straight road that provides a vital link between the Black Sea port of Poti and Tbilisi, which lies in the eastern part of the country. At each village or town, I inquired after Shevardnadze's movements. "He was here an hour ago," came the familiar reply, "but he's gone to Poti by helicopter." Or, "He'll be back this evening unless he goes to see the American ambassador, who has just flown to Kutaisi." Or, "It's a shame. You just missed Jaba [Ioseliani] as well."

My quest, though exhausting, was instructive. On the approach to one town, I noticed a distant railway bridge decorated with two tanks and a multiple rocket launcher (the Soviet-made GRAD, which has become as much a symbol of the Caucasian wars as the mortar is of the Yugoslav wars). Because none of the roadblocks manned by Georgians had boasted anything more dramatic than a rifle, I suspected this one might be Russian and approached the bridge with care. I was right. Fluttering above the first tank was the unmistakable white, blue, and red of the Russian Federation. Here was clear evidence: having already struck a deal with Ioseliani, Shevardnadze now had signed a contract with the devil itself—the Russian military.

The unshaven *bons viveurs* who guard Georgian roadblocks will keep a traveler delayed for hours, telling stories and drinking toasts to peace and to Georgia's glorious past, but there is no point messing with Russian soldiers. "Dokumenti," they snap, Kalashnikov in your face. "Open the trunk! Where are you going? What are you doing?"

My encounters with Russian soldiers underscored an immutable law of the Caucasus: nobody does anything without first asking the Russians. The Georgians' miserable fate since independence is the product of their own orgiastic departure from the Russian zone of influence. Confident in the knowledge that their withdrawal would soon unleash a reign of mayhem in Georgia, the Russians quietly packed their bags. Ironically, Gamsakhurdia's anti-Russian platform played into their hands.

Later, however, Shevardnadze was obliged to plead for their return in order to prevent his country from disintegrating—an action that Gamsakhurdia and his followers saw as proof that Shevardnadze was handing Georgia back to Russia. A week before Zugdidi fell, the Russian military had agreed without hesitation to secure the road and rail links that form Tbilisi's lifeline to Poti. Shevardnadze had also been forced to "re-

quest" that [illegible] the security [illegible] blockade [illegible] leading into the port. When I inspected the harbor, I saw [illegible] little Russian [illegible] the few civilian [illegible] lyer manning [illegible] quay of this nominally civilian harbor by a bevy of aggressive Russian guards. Georgia, it was clear, no longer enjoyed sovereignty over Poti's shipping facilities.

But what I saw in Poti and the presence of some 20,000 Russian troops stationed in Georgian territory are not the only proofs that the Russians have played their hand carefully and well. The autonomous republic of Ajaria, populated by Georgian Muslims, refuses to recognize the authority of Tbilisi and has offered full harbor facilities to the Russian military. And thanks to the support the Russians offered the Abkhazian autonomous republic, they have the use of the port at its capital, Sukhumi, a city that Shevardnadze says he intends to recover. So the Russian Black Sea Fleet, which as recently as 1992 had been told by Shevardnadze to vacate

THE [illegible] SHEVARDNADZE'S [illegible] DEPENDENCE IS THE [illegible] ORGIASTIC DEPARTURE FROM THE RUSSIAN ZONE OF INFLUENCE



Georgia's coastline, is now in complete control of [illegible] the country [illegible] capital. [illegible] Sea now eluding the Russians are [illegible]

[illegible] by [illegible] [illegible] in the village of [illegible] [illegible] up, but [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] eastern Mingrelia, the district Gamsakhurdia

Mingrelians are Georgians, they speak their own language, which is related to Georgian but incomprehensible to Georgians. The troops patrolling Abasha were all from eastern Georgia. "This bunch is incorrigible," said a guard sitting outside the headquarters, referring to the Mingrelians. The guard was cleaning his large, Czech-built machine gun with a tenderness bordering on obsession. "They're chicken as well, because they get their children to go out in the streets and chant 'Gamsakhurdia, Gamsakhurdia.' Of course, the adults don't dare."

THE RUSSIANS HAVE REOPENED THE GREAT GAME IN THE CAUCASUS—THE BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF CENTRAL ASIA

The relationship between Georgians and Mingrelians is curious, hard for an outsider to comprehend. Both groups favor an integral Georgian state that would include those areas (like Abkhazia and South Ossetia) where ethnic minorities have mounted successful armed resistance to Tbilisi's authority. But the Mingrelians and Georgians mistrust each other profoundly, another hindrance to the consolidation of an integral Georgian state.

Shevardnadze was still in the field when his aides invited me into their headquarters, which was Abasha's village hall. The small meeting room was dark, but there was a table laden with copious amounts of Georgian food, including the country's ubiquitous walnut paste. The curious company included the head of Georgia's Civil Aviation Authority, several of Shevardnadze's bodyguards, and the pro-Shevardnadze mayor of Abasha, who had been imprisoned when Gamsakhurdia's troops were in control of the village.

Georgians conduct their mealtime conversations through toasts: One person, known as the *tamadai* (invariably male), picks up a glass and begins a monologue. Afterward, wine or cognac is downed solemnly. Each man at the table (women are not expected to talk) then replies. It is considered impolite to chat during the toasts, but you are allowed to drink, so that after an hour or so, the quality of the toasts is undermined by the alcohol.

The most affable person at the table was one of Shevardnadze's bodyguards. "I served in the Special Forces in the Red Army," he told me. "Since the C.I.S. we are probably the most efficient outfit in Georgia." Then our talk abruptly stopped as a tree trunk of a man creaked into the room—Gela Lanchava, front-line fighter, national hero, and Georgia's deputy interior minister. He sat down, slamming two immense arms on the table. He nodded to one of the staff, and a full half pint of Georgian cognac was produced, an amount sufficient to hospitalize most mortals. Lanchava drank it off. Then he casually nodded his head once more and repeated the feat. And then a third time.

Still as sober as when he came in, Lanchava proudly pulled out the identity card of a Don Cossack, the traditional Russian volunteer soldier, which he had taken from the body of a dead fighter that day. "I told you the Russians were supporting the Zviadists," he exploded, referring to Gamsakhurdia's troops. "And here's the proof!"

To understand why the Russians would be aiding the very forces that Shevardnadze had asked them to help him conquer, one must realize that the Russians have, in effect, reopened the Great Game in the Caucasus—but this time, the opponent for control of Central Asia is not the British Empire of the late nineteenth century; it is perceived by the Russians to be the Turks and any Western power that would now deny Russian authority in the Caucasus. Not only did the Russians arm the South Ossetians in their vicious eighteen-month war of independence; when the Abkhazians, living in the autonomous republic to the west of Mingrelia, first rose up, in late 1991, they accused the Russians of supplying the Georgians with weaponry (which they were, under the terms of a previous agreement) at the same time as the Georgians were denouncing the Russians for arming the Abkhazians.

Like most Georgians, Lanchava believed that after the fall of Gamsakhurdia's forces, the key to Georgia's fortunes lay in the reestablishment of sovereignty over Abkhazia, which fell to the indigenous Abkhazian minority last September. He was also convinced that Georgia lost Abkhazia because of what he called Gamsakhurdia's perfidious treachery. "The battle for Abkhazia was unwinnable because we had the Zviadists on our back to the east, so we could not establish working supply lines," he boomed. "And although Gamsakhurdia said he would bury the hatchet [between his forces and those of Shevardnadze] for the duration of the Abkhaz war and send his troops to defend Sukhumi, that whole business was an elaborate trick."

With Lanchava in mid-breath, the entire company suddenly stood at attention as Eduard Shevardnadze strolled into the room. Shevardnadze, who was wearing a brown leather jacket of the sort much admired by secret police throughout Eastern Europe in the good old days, is not an imposing man, but he is a natural leader and effortlessly commands attention. All eyes in the room turned to his benevolent smile. In Georgia, he is remembered not just as the venerable Soviet foreign minister but as the Georgian Communist Party leader from 1972 to 1985, the man who bolstered Georgian culture at the expense of Moscow's influence and, perhaps unwittingly, at the expense of Georgia's minorities.

Shevardnadze differed with Lanchava over the cause of the Georgian defeat in Abkhazia. "If the events of the third and fourth of October [the attempted coup against Boris Yeltsin at the White House in Moscow] had happened earlier, then Sukhumi would not have fallen," he maintained.

Shevardnadze and Lanchava can debate endlessly the short-term strategic intricacies of the Georgian civil war, but both men know that the fate of Georgia and its provinces depends on developments within Russia. Shevardnadze insists that liberal Russians and the Yeltsinites must respect the independence of the former republics, but most other Georgians I spoke to are convinced that Russia will continue to reassert its imperial influence over the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Ukraine regardless of who is in control in Moscow.

Shevardnadze is not loved in Russia. The Russian military holds him chiefly responsible for the demolition of its Eastern European playgrounds; and Yeltsin associates him with Mikhail Gorbachev, though Shevardnadze and Yeltsin try hard to keep up a cordial dialogue, recognizing that their interests frequently coincide.

Here in Abasha, the former Soviet foreign minister affirmed what most Georgians suspected but dared not say aloud—that he had capitulated to the Russians. He was quick to explain to me that this was not because he was spineless but because he understood that Georgia cannot survive without them. "I was not keen to join the CIS," he said, referring to the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Russian-dominated organization of former Soviet Republics, "but Georgia is organically connected to Russia because of its economic and industrial ties, and cannot exist without it. Since the Russian withdrawal, we have suffered a total collapse, economically and socially, and we all now agree that we have to regulate our relations with Russia properly."

Shevardnadze is determined to salvage what remains of the Georgian economy, which has been gutted in the three years since Gamsakhurdia's election. The newly born country embarked on a collective hunt for the Russian conspiracy and found it behind every tree. Not greatly perturbed, the Russian government simply turned off the faucets. Apart from hydroelectric power, Georgia has no ready domestic source of energy; oil and gas supplies from [illegible] were cut off, and, overnight, electricity became a thing of the past. Factories [illegible] ever since. [illegible] battalion [illegible] although [illegible] progress [illegible] Today Georgia wallows in poverty. The average salary, paid in hyperinflated [illegible] lent to only 60 cents a month. A loaf [illegible] 70 cents, a liter of bread [illegible].

Such luxuries are found in relative abundance on the black market in Tbilisi. But in war-torn cities like Samtredia, another place I visited in western Georgia, the situation was dire. On the day I was there, packs of gaunt dogs hunted for what few food scraps were left by humans. At the town's only open canteen, chops of indefinable pedigree, swilling around in a tepid gray liquid, were priced at $1. Most of Samtredia's citizens appeared to sit around all day at the local bus station waiting for buses that were not coming, as if they existed in an [illegible] perpetually waiting for Godot but indifferent as to whether he turned up.



Anarchy and economic collapse quickly formed a costly symbiotic relationship. When Russia pulled the economic rug from under Georgia, paramilitary units began to proliferate. During the war [illegible] independence, Tbilisi was transformed into a permanent exhibition of portable weaponry, ranging from pis-

Photographs by [illegible]

tols (de rigueur for all males) to hand-held rocket launchers. "Detroit is nothing compared to this place," I was told by a stall seller in Tbilisi's marketplace. "Murders and shoot-outs every night—some of them political, some of them mafia, some of them kids out for a laugh." With economic collapse came a rapid increase in crime, particularly among young people, much of it drug-related, with armed gangs breaking into hospitals and looting morphine supplies.

How was it that Georgia thought it could break from Russia so easily? "The Georgians have an unfortunately inflated sense of their own importance to the West," explained one Western diplomat I spoke with, "and they genuinely believed



[illegible] the first time in their history that America or Germany or some other country was going to bail them out." Having had considerable firsthand experience with Western diplomacy, Eduard Shevardnadze was more realistic than most Georgians. When I asked him about the West's contribution to Georgia's reforms, he re[illegible] that we would like the West to do, but I don't think they have let us down. After all, we are all beggars now."

As the temperature dipped toward zero in Tbilisi and the first snows began to fall, Georgians prepared for another wintry reminder of the country's precarious condition. In my small apartment on Rustaveli Avenue, the main thoroughfare in Tbilisi, there was no heat. But because it was located right next to the parliament building, the apartment was connected to the government electricity grid and had an electric heater, which saved me from freezing at night.

From my window I could see the city's long boulevards and bold neoclassical facades, the inevitable result of Georgia's long relationship with Russia. In 1801, Georgians welcomed czarist troops as protection against the Persians, whose army wrought ghastly destruction in a sweep through the country in 1797. In exchange for military control, the Russians helped ease the Georgians out of feudalism and, over the next century, encouraged a remarkable flowering of culture in Tbilisi. The stunning architecture of the city's old section draws on Central Asian, Russian, Hapsburg, and Italian traditions, and testifies to the growth of Tbilisi as the most important trading center in the Caucasus during this period. When the industrial world turned to oil, the traders of Tbilisi grew rich on the rail lines linking the Central Asian wells with the Georgian ports on the Black Sea.

Yet just yards from my apartment stood a reminder of how Tbilisi's fate has changed since independence. In January 1992, the buildings along Rustaveli Avenue were nearly obliterated by tanks, field guns, mortars, and infantry as the commander of Georgia's National Guard, Tengiz Kitovani, threw in his lot with the growing ranks opposing President Gamsakhurdia.

"The shock of seeing the parliament building, the Rustaveli school, and the theater being trashed by these two armies was perhaps the greatest among many that Georgians, certainly in Tbilisi, have suffered since independence," said Gogo Khaindrava, a member of Georgia's ruling Military Council. "That is why the civil war in western Georgia seems such a mild affair. We are all Georgians, and there is a tacit agreement on both sides—no more smashing the infrastructure."

Yet in Tbilisi the infighting and the economic collapse have already done more than enough damage. One family I visited on the fourteenth floor of a housing complex were in a state of deep

depression because their electricity was erratic and their water supply had been turned off for more than three weeks. "Come with me. I'll show you what we do," said David, the father, by profession a surgeon. Carrying two buckets each, we went down the fourteen floors, across a grassy square covered with muddy snow, and up two floors of an identical high-rise to a friend's house. We filled the buckets, drank a glass of cognac and a cup of tea (both essential by this time), and then trudged back across the yard. I was exhausted by the time we carried the full buckets back up to the fourteenth floor. David performed this thirty-two-floor ritual twice a day.

Not only is water hard to come by but bread, too, is scarce. Although each person is entitled to one loaf every two days, to get their loaf Georgians must stand in line for six hours or so outside one of the state bakeries. The task is clearly wearing. Passing a group of people at a bakery near the center of Tbilisi, I watched as one man's patience finally gave out. He pulled a revolver from under his coat and fired three shots in the air before waving the gun maniacally in the face of the baker. The baker shoved four loaves into the gunman's hands, and the would-be assailant walked away with his booty.



Such incidents, and even riots, are not uncommon, and they are a somber twist on Georgians' obsession with food and drink. Throughout the postwar period, Georgia, famous for its bars and restaurants and cuisine, was known as "the playground of the Soviet Union." Although the republic's growth rate was slower than that of most other Soviet republics, Georgian citizens saved at twice the Soviet average. Georgia boasted more doctors per capita than any other republic, and its citizens were among the most highly educated in the Soviet Union.

"This was the most prosperous republic," remembered George Tarkhan-Mouravi, a Georgian physicist and political analyst, and the publisher of the excellent English-language bulletin *The Georgian Chronicle*. "The Georgians controlled most of the black market in Moscow, and the republic extracted more resources from Moscow than it gave in return—a curious colonialism, indeed!"

Some of the more ingenious Georgians have compensated for their recent deprivation by bringing in oil and basic foodstuffs from neighboring Azerbaijan, a mere ninety-minute drive from Tbilisi. It is around this black-market network that the armed mafiosi have been nurtured, transporting oil in convoys from the border and re-

[illegible] trucks on the streets of Tbilisi at a 1,000 percent markup.

[illegible]

mobsters). But he has made them less ostentatious by banning the public display of weapons. The crime bosses and the most respected hit men hang out at the Metekhi hotel, a modernist construction that looks out of place among the decaying yet still beautiful nineteenth-century wooden houses on the south bank of the Kura River.

It was in the lobby of the Metekhi, while waiting for a friend, that I saw a man enter, dressed in an immaculate Italian fawn overcoat, with the obligatory shades and trilby. As he stepped through the security door, a warning alarm sounded and a red light flashed. A huge guard in fatigues slowly emerged from a dark office carrying a Kalashnikov. With impeccable politesse, he demanded that the newly arrived capo hand over his gun. The man spluttered, "But do you know who I am?" "Yes, sir," the guard replied, "and it's a pleasure that you have decided to visit the Metekhi. But you can't come in unless you give me your gun." From out of the overcoat a shining black Beretta pistol emerged, as well as what appeared to be an Uzi.

> [illegible] WOULD LIKE THE WEST TO DO MORE, SHEVARDNADZE SAID. "BUT I DON'T THINK THEY HAVE LET US DOWN. AFTER ALL, WE ARE AT THE DOORS NOW."

"They've really cleaned up the Metekhi, you know," an American businessman remarked to me at the hotel bar. I casually asked what his line of business was, knowing full well that almost no authentic commerce goes on in Georgia. "Oh, bit of buying," he answered. "Bit of selling. Bit of technology transfer. You know." Well, no, I didn't know. But my hunch that his business had some intrigue attached to it was confirmed when we started talking about the political situation in the country. "Georgia is moving further up the agenda of American-Russian relations," he mused as we stared into our whiskeys, precious at $8 a shot. "I think people in Washington are getting a little concerned at the activity of the bear down



I had no proof that he was CIA, but CIA operatives have been milling around Tbilisi and its environs for a while now. The most famous was Fred Woodruff, the CIA special envoy in Tbilisi, who was shot in the head last August while living it up in the backseat of the car belonging to the chief of Shevardnadze's security staff. At the [illegible] were accompanied by two women (one of whom, allegedly Woodruff's lover, works as a waitress at the Metekhi). They were traveling mid-evening [illegible]

had once been a conduit for Russia's imperial expansion into Georgia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was there that a drunken soldier tried to wave them down in an attempt to steal their gasoline. The car sped on, and the drunk fired a single shot, which chanced to hit Woodruff in the back of the head. James Woolsey, the head of the CIA, flew down to Tbilisi from Moscow, where he was staying, to take charge of Woodruff's body.

As to why the CIA has so many operatives hanging around Tbilisi, one can only assume that the CIA is most interested in Georgia's fate. The Russians need to control Georgia not because the republic itself is of intrinsic value but because it has ports on the Black Sea, because the headquarters of the Russians' trans-Caucasian army division is in Tbilisi, and, most important of all, because if they control Georgia, they control the road to the Azeri coast of the Caspian Sea and the route to Central Asia, toward the rich oil fields of Kazakhstan. The centuries-old logic of geography still holds, and it is no coincidence that just over the Georgian border to the north lies the capital of North Ossetia (in the Russian Federation), from which the Russians can look down on their Georgian protectorate. The name of this capital is Vladikavkaz, which means "Rule the Caucasus." What the CIA thinks it can do about Russian control is a mystery. Perhaps it is those oil fields in Kazakhstan that exercise the busy minds of Moscow and Washington.

If Shevardnadze is to retain control of Georgia, he must restore Tbilisi's sovereignty over Abkhazia. But he will have to offer the Abkhazians substantial local autonomy. As of this writing, negotiations had started in Geneva between the Abkhazians and the Georgians (in the benevolent presence of a Russian delegation, of course). These talks could be as interminable and ineffective as has been the Geneva Conference on Yugoslavia, which began in Au-

ist 1992 and continues today. Ultimately the
ussians will decide the constitutional status of
bkhazia. In the end, Shevardnadze will have no
hoice but to bow to Moscow.

I was not able to reach Abkhazia because the
ease-fire line is a death trap—nobody can go
cross it in either direction and survive. But I did
ee images of the battle there. Georgian films were
onsidered the jewel of Soviet cinema, and, in
ict, one of the country's most celebrated directors
; Gogo Khaindrava. He conducted me through
ae industrial wasteland of Tbilisi's once-famous
ovie studios. On the one editing machine that
till worked, he was preparing a special screening
f the film he had directed while simultaneously
ighting the Abkhazian war. (Khaindrava is also
a Georgian war hero.) "They came into one vil-
age and slaughtered all the Georgians who had not
led, including one pregnant woman," he told me.
'They then hung a sign over the house, an-
nouncing GEORGIAN MEAT FOR SALE."

Khaindrava turned on the projector. Flickering
across the editing screen were images indistin-
guishable from those taken at Stalingrad or dur-
ing the siege of Leningrad. Black-and-white and
speeded up, the pictures showed exhausted peas-
ants, filthy and unshaven, surrounded by the
empty shells of buildings destroyed by mortars,
howitzers, tanks, and rockets. The scorched earth
was comparable to the destruction of Bosnian
and Croatian villages—nothing stands, nothing
lives. But this was neither Sarajevo nor Leningrad;
this was the village of Shroma in Abkhazia in
1993.

"It was a terrible war, Abkhazia," Khaindrava
lamented. "We were routed—outgunned and out-
smarted and stabbed in the back by Gamsakhurdia. We must get Abkhazia back, and Shevardnadze will stand or fall on this."

A peaceful outcome doesn't seem likely. Relations between the Abkhazians and the Georgians have been difficult for decades. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the Abkhazians were quick to seek the protection of the Russians. Weapons filtered through in large numbers. As Georgia tried to tighten its grip on Sukhumi, both sides prepared for war. From an Abkhazian separatist pamphlet:

> The ideological inspirers and organizers of the military aggressions SHEVARDNADZE, IOSELIANI ... and their minions, just like Adolf Hitler, in a fascist manner, hoped to carry out a blitz—a full occupation of the Abkhaz republic within 24 hours! ... But they miscalculated! There was no triumphant march. Instead, a lengthy, bloody war began.

The conflict generated a frightful refugee crisis: after the collapse of Sukhumi, tens of thousands of ethnic Georgians living in Abkhazia fled the approaching Abkhazian forces. This caravan of trauma was forced across the frozen mountains of Svanetia, the most inhospitable region of Geor-

gia's northwest, [illegible] suffered [illegible] of the victims children and the elderly.

To accommodate the [illegible] ple, Georgians [illegible] tels, schools, and hospitals. [illegible] cities. At the Hotel Agara [illegible] twenty people were crammed [illegible] single room. Most of the [illegible] of clothes, and for food they depended on the erratic handouts of the state and the international aid agencies, which have done a remarkable job in Georgia but cannot keep up with demand. It was impossible for me to understand how a country of 5.5 million people, where the most basic social structures are on the verge of total breakdown, would be able to sustain the burden of refugees.

The story of Georgia, finally, is just one element of the breathtakingly complex upheaval in the Caucasus: Azeris against Armenians; Ingush against North Ossetians; and Russians simultaneously against and with everyone. At the heart of the myriad disputes are the same insoluble questions of borders and minorities that have ravaged what was once Yugoslavia. Inside Georgia itself, the Russians have now afforded military and political support to all sides, and only they can mediate a political settlement. Whether they will be able to do so successfully is an open question.

As I prepared to leave Tbilisi, I heard two predictions for the outcome in Georgia. A senior diplomat in Tbilisi was confident. "This [current fighting] can never threaten security the way that [it has in] Yugoslavia, because here there is a regulating imperial power, and sooner or later the Russians will restore order."

IF THE RUSSIANS CONTROL GEORGIA, THEY CONTROL THE ROUTE TO CENTRAL ASIA, AND BEYOND THE ROLLING FIELDS OF KAZAKHSTAN

That scenario contained a measure of hope, in contrast to the outlook of George Tarkhan-Mouravi. I asked the political analyst to compare Georgia's current status with the brief period of independence it enjoyed between 1918 and 1921, [illegible] the Red Army reintegrated the country into the Russian zone of influence. "There was never any real possibility of Georgia resisting Soviet power in the twenties," he said. "Its fate was sealed with its attempt at independence after the First World War. The current chaos," he [illegible] "is merely a prelude to the onset of the apocalypse."

One certainly hopes not. But it is impossible to gauge where Georgia [illegible] Recent events [illegible] that the [illegible] most complete. ■

DADDY'S GIRL

By Thom Jones

Pa liked Tootie the best. We were three girls, and then Hubert died at six weeks of whooping cough. Pa always wanted a boy, and when Tootie came along, number four, she was as close as you could get. Tomboy. Followed Pa everywhere. Out in the garage all the time with the mechanics was Tootie. Tootie could fix cars. She knew how they worked, and when something went wrong with one she could diagnose its troubles. All I knew of cars was to get in and go. When I was fifteen, I said to Pa, "Pa, when you going to give me a car?" There was an old Ford in the lot and he said, "You can have that Ford, Junk," and he tossed me the keys. He always called me Junk, which is not to say he didn't love his kids, but [illegible] like women, and this is one way it slipped through, by calling me that name. Pa was good to me, and although he was what you would call a ladies' man, he really hated women. [illegible] He would [illegible] out with floozies and buy them diamond pendants and then tell Ma [illegible] to the point where she would almost faint.



He would get her so riled, me and my sisters would have to put a cold rag on Ma's head at the back of the store in the kitchen where no customers could see. She would go back in the kitchen and nearly faint because of the way he would throw it in her face.

Anyhow, Pa gave me the keys to an old Ford that was parked under the oak tree back behind the car shop. It was a convertible, and me and Barbara Carpenter drove it down Lake Street past the stockyards, glad to stir up a little breeze, it was such a hot day. Of course, I didn't know how to drive and we smashed into a fire hydrant in Montgomery. No one was hurt, but we had to walk home along the side of Lake Street, which was so hot that day the tar was melting and the heat of the pavement burned through our saddle shoes. The dog days of August. I told Pa what happened and he didn't get mad or anything, he just told one of the mechanics who had some spare time to take me out in a new Chevrolet and learn me how to drive—that's what he sold, Chevrolets—and when I learned how to drive, I had a new car. Pa was good that way. When my sister Ida wanted to play tennis, he had the tennis courts built and Ida got fancy tennis clothes, but after a few weeks she got tired of it. I think Pa just built them to show off, because at the time all of the rich people were putting up tennis courts. Pa had them build two courts and put a big fence around them so no one would have to run down tennis balls. They still have morning glories growing on the fence. If my arthritis isn't too bad I like to go and look at them and smell the lilacs when they bloom.

Tootie could play tennis and beat anyone in the whole south end of town. Grown men she could beat, but when she played Pa she would let him win even though Pa was pretty bad at tennis apart from the fact that he was a big and strong man.

Pa had this punching bag in the basement and he liked to punch on it and show off, and all the kids in the neighborhood got pretty good at it.

Because he liked kids and knew how to fool with them, all the kids in the neighborhood thought Pa was swell. I could punch the bag like all the kids, but Tootie could actually box and would box with Pa. She could beat up any of the boys, even the ones that were quite a bit older. This went on until she was about thirteen and she got her period, which was normal but really threw Tootie for a loop.

You know, Pa could play the fiddle and dance and call square dances. Everybody liked Pa. The mayor and big shots in town, the poor people—just about everybody liked Pa. He had Ma pack lunches for us in a straw basket so he could take us kids out on summer picnics, usually to the gravel pit for swimming. In the fall he liked to take us out bird-watching and got binoculars for everyone and would point out the birds. There was all kinds of different ones in those days. The best present he ever gave to Tootie was a book on tropical birds, and she used to tell Pa she was going off into the jungle someday to see birds like this. Ma never went along on the picnics—she always worked the store—but she was glad for us to go.

All of the girls were pretty, but Tootie was the best. She looked like a movie star. She looked like Rita Hayworth. All the boys was after her. She cut her hair short and dressed like a boy, but her beauty came through; you just couldn't hold back that kind of beauty. Pa was drinking bad by then, losing money, giving it to women, ruining his business, taking money from Ma. She kept her store money in Dutch Master cigar boxes or White Owl boxes, and he would get to drinking and just take it from her until she got to hiding it. One time he pulled out a .32 pistol and stuck it in her face up in the bedroom because she wouldn't give him any money. She was pregnant with Moonie at the time and nearly lost her. Pa called Ma filthy names and kicked her down the steps. It was terrible, but in those days things like that was common, Pa being drunk—scenes like that you used to hear about regular and think nothing of it. That's just how life was in those days.

When Pa pulled out his .32 that was the only time he ever laid a hand on Ma, but he had done worse things. All of us girl[illegible] while Ma laid there in bed worried about Pa and went into labor. No sooner did Ma give premature birth to Moonie, the fifth girl, than Pa came homesick to death. He came [illegible] home because he had gone blind drinking bad moonshine [illegible] Prohibition times and he [illegible] liver. I remember the doctor [illegible] was nothing they could do. Pa screamed something horrendous and vomited blood all over the bedroom for five days before he died. We girls had to take care of him. Ma was busy with Moonie and wouldn't have anything to do with him, and he laid there and died in the same bed where his youngest daughter had just been born.

Really I was the main one who had to take care of Pa and look after Moonie and run the store to boot. I was the oldest and stuck with all of the responsibility.

Sometime after the funeral a lawyer man came and told Ma that they were going to take the property away because of all the debts Pa had left. Ma got another lawyer and told him that if she could keep the store she would pay him back all the money Pa owed, which was $63,000. In those days that was like millions. But Ma worked the store day and night and paid back the money.

Of all the girls, Ma didn't show any favoritism except maybe for Moonie. When Moonie was little, she had curls and looked like Shirley Temple. All of the customers in the store would come in and rave about her and make a fuss. It wasn't Ma so much as it was the customers. Moonie seemed even prettier than Tootie because she liked being feminine and liked clothes and dressing up, but whenever Tootie halfway tried to look like a woman, she was gorgeous. She had the most beautiful shiny red hair like you see on those Irish. Beautiful smoochy lips, a pretty face—there's no denying. She just couldn't hide it.

When Tootie was about sixteen, the boys got after her something awful. She wouldn't go out with them. She would play baseball and basketball with them and horse around with them because [illegible] was still this awful tomboy, but she wouldn't "fool" with

[illegible] such a toughie and could go without [illegible] ing in her brain and talked to angels. Sometimes she talked to Jesus. All of [illegible]

[illegible] she didn't [illegible] this. She was the valedictorian of the high school class. She went off to college and studied to be a doctor in spite of her headaches. One time she came home for Christmas and told me the men in college was after her and she didn't want any fool man. This is because she was her daddy's girl and no man in the world could be like Pa for her. Pa was far from perfect but he was Tootie's pal, and whenever you told her how Pa kicked Ma down the stairs and pulled out his .32, Tootie would walk away or she would defend Pa. Once she hit Ida in the face over a quarrel about Pa and broke her nose. Tootie could hit like a man. It was a curse that she was so beautiful, and at medical school she got fat to cover it up. She went into a fat period. Tootie was the first woman doctor in all of town. Ma helped—it was the German way to get education and better yourself in life. Tootie won scholarships and went to the University of Chicago, which is where all of them intellectuals went. She inherited Ma's spunk and wasn't afraid of nothing.

Ma sent me to secretary school, but I was running with Chunky then and quit after three months. Ida married Harry and he was good to her, although he liked to run with women and cheat. Harry got rich and moved them to De Kalb, and we didn't see that much of them after that. Moonie married Tom when she was eighteen, then after the war he left her for some floozy and she had a nervous breakdown and we had to look after her and the baby until she got over it and married Wilson.

Mary Lou, the second oldest and the

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one most like Tootie, got married to Monk and moved to Oswego. Ma ran the store on her own except there were always grandkids to take the clinkers out of the furnace and shovel coal, stock the shelves, and do all of the heavy work, and we girls was never far away. Moonie never did much to help in the store. She was the opposite of Tootie. She was crazy for men. Happy-go-lucky whenever one came around.

I can remember the way Ma used to stand behind the counter in the store and talk to customers. She had a way of standing, her legs one in front of the other but spread wide. She always wore a cotton dress with an apron, and when she would talk to customers she would always say, "Ain't that swell?" No matter what they were telling her it was always, "Ain't that swell?" She had a big belly and little stick legs. She was left-handed too. Ma was pretty when she was young, but when she got older she lost her looks. She looks like George Washington in the last picture I have of her, and her little stick legs look like Babe Ruth's.

Chunky and I lived in the house across from the store. Chunky was a weakling and never kept a steady job. He was sickly. He was always seeing Tootie about some ailment, and she made him feel better. If she couldn't kid him out of his troubles she gave him pills. What they were was sugar pills. We all had to laugh because we knew, but Chunky was in the dark and said those pills made him feel like a new man. Tootie liked Chunky and would listen to him after he got religion. Tootie was interested in religion since the time she got her headaches and saw the dancing lights of Heaven and talked to the angels. One day she came home and told Ma she had joined the Catholic Church. Can you imagine that? We were Lutherans, German Lutherans, and Ma just about died. I remember there was a big fight about it in the store. And while the fight was going on there was a terrible thunderstorm with lightning. Lightning hit the walnut tree, which sat just outside the window near the cash register. Scared me enough to kill me. It sounded like the world coming to an end, with a smell like I never knew.

When Ma was a kid living out on the prairie, one of thirteen kids, she was sitting by a Franklin stove when lightning struck through the stovepipe and knocked her out. That's why she had lightning rods on the store—three of them. There was one on the gas station. Three on the garage. Two on the little house. One on Weasie's shack. One on the back house. Two on the barn, but none on that blame walnut tree. Boom! It sounded like the world cracked in half.

Ma always got upset during a thunderstorm; she would get to shaking, and she was doing this during the fight with Tootie. I remember the electric went out and I was lighting candles in the store when she and Tootie got into the fight about the Catholic Church. Ma was almost as upset as the time Pa pulled the pistol on her. The storm and the fight all at once. Even I was scared. Ma's cat was so scared it started running around the walls until it was running on the ceiling through the power of centrifugal force. Nobody believes me, but that cat was running on the ceiling, completely upside down, or so it seemed to me. Maybe I am wrong.

It began to hail the size of grapefruits. They always say when it hails that it was the size of golf balls or grapefruits, although if you were to see it, you would see that it hailed the size of BB's. But I was there, and it hailed the size of grapefruits! Smashed up the roof on Mrs. Idoc's house. Tootie left in her doctor's Buick, which got dented on top from all that hail, and I had to help Ma upstairs and put ice packs on her head.

A week later we got a letter from Tootie—she had gone and joined the Catholic Church and they made her a nun. About a year after that we got a letter from her from Africa. All these beautiful stamps on an envelope that looked like wax paper. Tootie was a doctor in a leper colony. She said she was happy serving the Lord.

Because of Chunky, I left the Lutheran Church and became a Baptist. Chunky was a street-corner preacher. He worked odd jobs when he could. Then he died of heart trouble at thirty-one. The last thing he said to me was, "I told you I was sick, Junk. But now I'm going to a better place."

After Ma died, blind with diabetes, and the money was split up, Tootie

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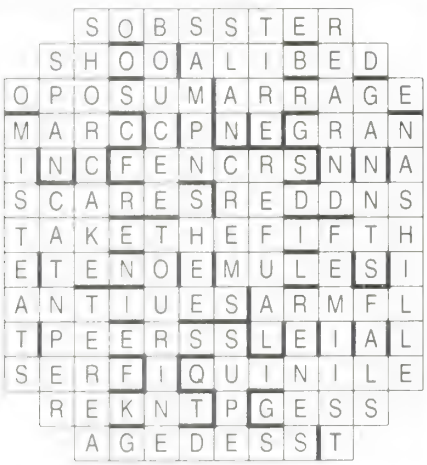
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wrote a letter to Ma's lawyer and said she wanted all of her money to go to the mission to buy medicine for all of them lepers. Mary Lou tricked the lawyer—she was smart and had a head for figures. Of all of the girls, Mary Lou was closest to Tootie and wrote to her in Africa every month telling her about her life with Monk and raising Pug and Barney and so on. It was a happy life. Mary Lou didn't have to work because Monk made good with his welding and so on and eventually became the plant manager at the Durabuilt. So Mary Lou wrote her happy news and told her what everyone in the family was doing, not mentioning the bad things that happen in all families. Mary Lou tricked that lawyer and held money back for Tootie, and it was a good thing.

When Moonie called to tell me Mary Lou had cancer, she just said, "Mary Lou called me and said the doctor told me I've got cancer in my breast." Just as plain as that. Moonie said that Mary Lou didn't seem that worried about it. She said she'd had a lump for two years and tried to make it go away by practicing Christian Science. When Monk found out about it he took her to the doctor and they took off the breast. Monk was pretty upset. He could count on Mary Lou. Mary Lou and the kids were all he lived for. They took off the breast and Mary Lou went home. She used to tell me, "I haven't got cancer anymore. I can just tell." But it went to her lungs. They had to put her in the hospital on oxygen, but she finally suffocated. I hope I don't die that way, and with diabetes I probably won't. Diabetes gives you a heart attack; Chunky said it feels like a truck driving on your chest. Real bad pain, but it's over in ten or fifteen minutes. Ain't that swell, the way we have to live and die and suffer on this earth?

It was a relief to see Mary Lou's suffering end, but still, after the death, Monk was left with a hole in his life. He didn't want another woman, although Pug and Barney tried to tell him that it would be a good idea. Then his dog died and Monk went through a drinking spell. Nobody wanted to be around him. That's how the family is about drinking—down on it. Ma

rilled that into us pretty good

Then Tootie comes home from Africa in her nun clothes. She isn't pretty no more, she's almost fifty years old. Her face is pinched and white, though you'd think it would have been an as black as the ace. It's a hard life over there in Africa, with bad food and constant work, she says. "The futility of it all," she says. "Such . . . futility." She talked like the world was coming to an end, and that wasn't like Tootie, even with her headaches. Futility. I had to look the word up in a dictionary. It means hopeless.

The Catholic Church gave Tootie a leave, and so she gets Monk straight off the booze and puts me on insulin shots. She didn't come home for Ma's funeral or for Ida's funeral after Ida died of kidney failure, but aside from Pa, Mary Lou was her closest friend and she flew home on a jet plane.

I asked her if she seen all of those birds in the jungle, and she said she did. I said, "Tootie, you look bad. What happened to you?" She said a big mamba snake, nine feet long, went crazy and bit five Africans and some goats. Tootie cut off its tail with a hoe, but that only made it mad and it chased after her and bit her too, over there on the Dark Continent. Her life and health was bad ever since. Still, she gave me hell because of what I eat, and I told her that if the Lord wanted to take me, I was ready to go. I would go up to Heaven and see Chunky again and Wilbur, my second husband. Since Tootie was a nun, I asked her who I was supposed to be married to—Chunky, my first man, or Wilbur? Tootie told me she didn't believe in God. I said, "Tootie, you are a nun, and when you was little and had your headaches, the angels talked to you and Jesus talked to you," and she just laughed a bitter laugh. She told me that being a nun was no different than if she had stayed in Aurora and lived a normal life with a man. She said there wasn't nothing to it and for sure there was no God. It was all just make-believe. But Tootie took Monk to the AA. She had a power over people and could make them well without giving them shots or medicine, she believed in herself so. Every day for ninety days she drove Monk to the AA, sometimes two and

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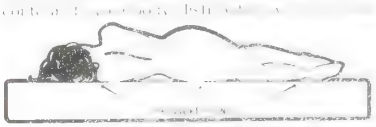
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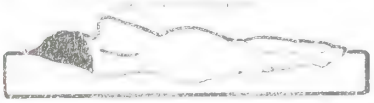
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three times a day. In this she was a hypocrite, because she didn't have any more belief in God, but she could still lay it out pretty good, and for Monk this was the cure, not the AA. She even got him to quit smoking.

One night Tootie came by in her car and caught me eating fried pork rinds and peanut brittle. It made me guilty but I told her, "Tootie, you can talk to me until you're blue in the face; I ain't going to change. I'm too old for it. A person has to eat."

She gave me hell upside and down and then drove me down to Oswego to check on Monk. After Mary Lou died, he'd kept everything in the house the same—we walked in through the back porch as always, and Monk was fixing himself something to eat in the microwave. It was like old times. He was glad to see us and he had a lot he had to get out. This was before his son Barney died and he gave up hope altogether. We went and sat in the living room, and Monk looked at Tootie and she looked at him, and I saw real love between the two of them. The love of two friends. Monk had the emphysema and it was hard for him to talk. He said, "All that welding in bad conditions with no ventilation, three packs of Chesterfields a day. Coming up in the Depression, it was hard. I had this old Oldsmobile—I was just a kid and it was my first car. It had a split windshield and the left side was broken out and, I don't know, it must have been January. I remember I went over to my girlfriend's house in that car and drank Coke and we played the player piano—'It's a Long Way to Tipperary,' 'Happy Days Are Here Again,' 'The Darktown Strutter's Ball'—when it started to blow real hard and I realized how late it was and I had to get home. I had to be to work the next day. The dagblam Oldsmobile overheated. We didn't have antifreeze in those days but ran alcohol through the radiator, and the closer I got to town, the hotter the car got and the slower it was going until I finally made it downtown and stopped at the Strand. A Chinaman there gave me some water for my radiator. I practically had to beg for it, since it was midnight and they were closing. No gloves. Twelve below. Lightweight coat. No hat. By the time I got to the store the car was overheating again, and it

pt going slower and slower until I
id to downshift into first gear as I
ove out Jericho Road towards my
other's house. Finally the old car
gged to a stop and smoke started pour-
ng out of the engine. I flipped up the
ood and a fire was coming out of the
arburetor, so I ran over to the side of
he road, scooping up frozen snow with
y bare hands alongside a barbed-wire
nce—can you imagine that?—trying
put it out. But that didn't work, so
beat the flames with my jacket, and
nat caught on fire, and by the time
he fire went out I was crying because
knew the engine was ruined and I
ust wanted to die. I was out there on
ericho Road by Blackberry Creek and
saw a light go on in Bobby O'Neil's
ouse and saw a face come up to the
window and push away the steam. Bob-
y made a cup with his hands to look
out—I can see his face now with that
stupid look of his; he was half crazy—
but then the light went out, and I was
oo ashamed to go knock on the door
nd ask for help, so I got in the car and
nuddled down, and before long I was in
and out of sleep and realized that if I
didn't get up and do something I was
going to freeze to death. Tootie, the
wind was blowing so hard I had to walk
home backwards! I thought the wind
was going to cut me in half. Three miles
of this. Frostbite ears, frostbite feet. My
mother soaked them in cool water and
put me to bed covered with wool blan-
kets, and I just passed out, didn't get to
work on time, and was fired. There I
was. The girlfriend two-timed me a day
later, my car was shot, and no job. Peo-
ple don't know how hard it was in those
days." This is what Monk said. Tootie
and I got nuts the way he was telling
the story, and we was laughing so hard
we practically wet our pants. I hadn't
got nuts and laughed like that since
Ida was alive. Ida could be fun and get
you nuts—make you have a good time.

This guy I saw on the *Donahue* show
said if you laugh all the time you can
heal yourself from fatal diseases and
that some guy healed himself by watch-
ing the Three Stooges and the Marx
Brothers. Well, I guess I'll just have to
die, because I could never laugh over
something so stupid as that. Really,
Monk knew what he was doing and
made the story funny to make us laugh
like that—he was always a kidder. But

You deserve a factual look at...

Peace in the Middle East (2)

Is the peace with Egypt an encouraging example for Israel?

What are the facts?

Peace with Egypt is the coldest possible. [illegible] true peace with Israel, Egypt received the [illegible] had invested over [illegible] ated flourishing [illegible] advanced military and [illegible] tions in the world and half the [illegible] oil fields that would have made Israel energy independent for the foreseeable future. Without firing a shot, Egypt received all of this, plus generous grants from the United States—$40 billion to date. What Egypt gave in return was a piece of paper. And even that was hedged. It would allow Egypt to join in any Arab War against Israel. The peace between Israel and Egypt, which the Israelis had envisioned to be like the peace between Germany and France, turned out, unfortunately, to be the coldest peace possible. It is less of a peace than a de facto state of non-belligerence. The Israeli ambassador in Cairo is isolated and blacklisted and does not participate in any official functions of the Egyptian government. There is practically no trade between the two countries and no cultural exchange. The public sector of Egypt, which constitutes 80% of the total economy is forbidden to do business with Israel. Private enterprises are actively discouraged and often threatened when they try to

> "Israel's present government must be commended for proceeding with the greatest caution in the current peace negotiations."

[illegible] a few Israelis visit Egypt [illegible] hardly any wish to visit are summoned to the secur[illegible]

Not forthcoming on diplomatic front. [illegible] Egypt or on the Egyptian border. The [illegible] highways, to the general applause of the [illegible] front, the Egyptians aren't any more forthcoming. Egypt spearheaded the campaign to [illegible] resolution in the U.N., contrary to U.S. wishes. Egypt exerts much effort to prevent African countries from establishing or renewing diplomatic relations with Israel. Egyptian diplomats, including [illegible] General of the United Nations, lobbied fervently against the loan guarantees that Israel needed to absorb and to settle the hundreds of thousands of Jewish [illegible] from the former Soviet Union.

The saving grace for Israel in a very cold peace with Egypt is that the Sinai is empty and secure as a buffer zone. But in the Golan Heights, which Syria wants to have returned in exchange for "peace", and the "West Bank" and Gaza, which the Palestinians whish to have given to them as a "reward" for stopping the "intifada", there is no room at all for buffer zones. Although autonomy for the native Arab population is definitely an Israeli policy goal and a commitment under the Camp David Accords, the "West Bank" and Gaza and the Golan cannot possibly be surrendered to another sovereignty for any foreseeable future. It would [illegible] peace with Egypt [illegible] an example of what peace by Syria or the Palestinians would be like. Israel's present government must be commended for proceeding with the greatest caution in the current negotiations and not to entrust its survival to empty promises. Only when the Arabs truly accept Israel as part of the Middle East should any further "land for peace" adjustments be considered.

[illegible]

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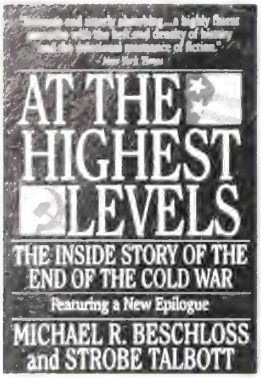
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false propaganda that might harm the interests of the

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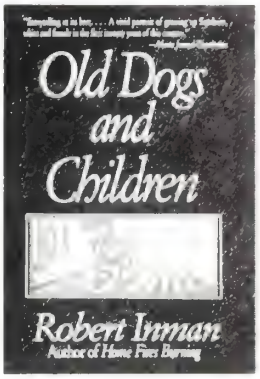
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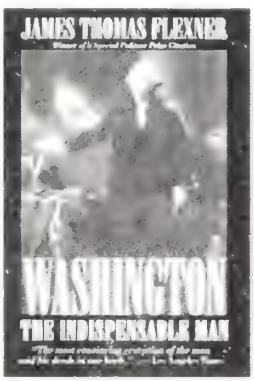


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BACK BAY BOOKS | LITTLE, BROWN

after Barney died right after the dog and Mary Lou, Monk caved in. All that good stuff he learned at the AA about the higher power, which helped Monk quit drinking and smoking, the higher power Monk chose to call God—it all quit working. Monk was no dummy. He could see Tootie was just practicing the Hippocratic oath with no real feeling. Although she tried to cover it up, Tootie went into a depression, too. She didn't feel right at home and she didn't want to go back to Africa. She put up a front, but Monk could see through it. No matter what Tootie did for him or what Pug did for him, he just sort of dried up inside. Pug was with him when he died. Pug was with Barney when he died and with Mary Lou. Three in five years. Pug said Monk was rational right up to the end. He didn't say nothing about Jesus taking him to Heaven. What he said was, "Ain't this a bitch?" After he said that, Pug said he rolled over and died. Maybe Pug saw it wrong. Maybe Monk closed his eyes and prayed for his own salvation, for the forgiveness of his sins. Late at night when I can't sleep, I think of Monk up in Heaven with Barney and Mary Lou and the whole family short of Pa, who died cursing God.

My doctor gave me an operation because my lower eyelids were growing up and going into my eye. The pain was horrible. Tootie did the operation over, to get all of the eyelid roots out, but they still sprout up and stick me in the eye and I have to tape my eye open, put drops in it, and take aspirin. Sometimes the pain is so bad I just have to lie on my bed and hold a picture of Jesus to my heart and pray for Him to come and take me, or pray for Him to save Tootie's soul. She has done good things for the world, but only through the grace of Jesus are we saved. Our righteous acts are as filthy rags. Everybody knows that one.

Tootie quit the Catholic Church and used the money Mary Lou held back to start her own doctor practice. Dermatology. In the daytime she cures pimples on teenagers and at night she goes out with men and lives the fast life. Her looks are gone. She dresses wrong. She doesn't know how to act right after all of those years in Africa. She comes on too independent.

Maybe being around those lepers and those African drum dances put Satan in her life. Satan made her forget how Jesus sent an angel to save her from an elephant stampede and another time from getting shot by those rebels in Angola, or how He saved her from her snakebite. Satan is the prince of this world and his powers are strong. He prowls the earth like a hungry lion looking for souls to devour. He knows his days are short, and he's trying to make hay and catch every sinner in his net of evil. I never thought he could get Tootie, though.

Or maybe Tootie's troubles was because of Pa. Tootie was her daddy's girl, and that can be too much of a good thing. I do believe that a Catholic can go to Heaven, but not unless they accept the grace and salvation the Lord offers us. It's so easy. It's so simple. Tootie don't think it's rational, and it isn't rational. Lions playing with lambs and eating straw sounds ridiculous, I guess, especially if you've been to Africa and seen how they do and have been bit by a nine-foot mamba snake . . . who am I to judge? It's not rational; it's what you call a paradox. You have to believe like a little child. Believe it because it's impossible. There's no need for holy water or praying to a lot of saints when you can talk to Jesus direct. When I think I can't take it no more, I hold my picture of Jesus against my breast and pray for Tootie and my family and for all of the lost souls in the world. I say, "Jesus, I cry my bleeding heart out every day for you; come down to earth and forgive them all, *for they know not what they do*. Come down and give us a thousand years of peace like you said you would and throw Satan down in the pit where he can't get at us no more." When I do this the grown-up in me dies and I'm like a little child and can see the world fresh again. *Born again*. Sometimes I don't really believe in no life after death, but I do believe that Jesus has saved me. Other times I believe it all—tigers eating straw, the water turned to wine, the Red Sea parting, the Tower of Babel, and a thousand years of peace on earth with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I am ninety-two years old and I had to get this in before I go. ■

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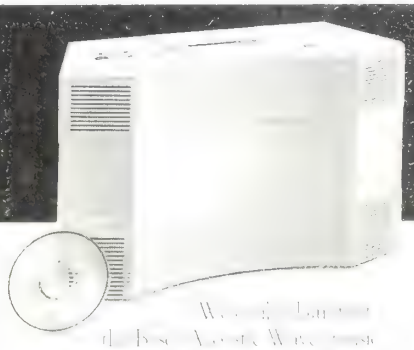
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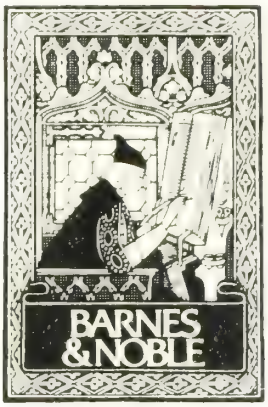
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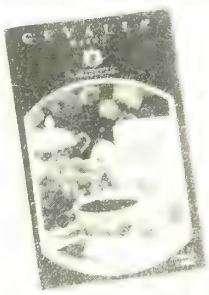


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YELLOW IN SPECTRUM

A jaundiced etymology

By Alexander Theroux



Yellow is a color, for all its common unaffordability with a thousand meanings. Wallace Stevens calls yellow the "first [illegible] and last attendant suggestion of decay and dissolution ("The grass is yellow and [illegible] but not to stay"). Keats often uses it synonymously. Linked with the sun: "The sun, in clownish yellow." It is the color of cowardice, third prize, the caution [illegible] and honey, the nimbus of saints, school buses, urine, New Mexico license plates, illness, highway signs, Pennzoil, and the oddly lit hair of all Australian aborigines before adulthood. Easter is yellow. So is spring and much of the beauty of autumn. It is the color in cathodes and transmission emitters in electrical chassis wiring. It represents wisdom, light, illumination, intuition, power and glory, the hue of confessors, divinity, magnanimity, ripening grain, and the gates of heaven. In Egypt it is the color of happiness and prosperity.

Yellow has many tints and hues. Banana is the proper term for the yellow color of a ripe banana, which was originally Asian, migrating with the [illegible]

[illegible]

in 1516. (Yellow taxicabs and yellow-painted beach wagons that were once used by resorts to meet guests at train stations were called "banana wagons.") There is tangerine yellow, a sort of honeysuckle. Golden ironweed. Celandine, a greenish yellow. Brass is dull yellow; canaries, bright. Then there is Cadillac gold. Donald Trump hated the original flat-yellow handrails at Trump Plaza. "See that gold Cadillac down the street?" he told his interior designer. "That's the color I want those handrails. Gold. Cadillac gold. Not yellow like a daisy.") A flavescent touch can be found in the green of early spring buds. Saffron has an orange cast, mustard a yellowish brown, like turmeric.

And what of the pale golden light filtering into the lovely Norman transepts through the high-fretted windows in the elegant cathedrals of France and England? Light in its glory is golden in its grace. A yellow baseball was actually used once when Chicago played Brooklyn in 1939. And yellow tennis balls are now officially used at Wimbledon. The famous helmet of Harold "Red" Grange, number 77, was yellow-brown. Amelia Earhart's favorite car, which she called the "Yellow Peril," was a 1922 Kissel Kar with big nickel headlamps and a long yellow body with black fenders. (A hybrid yellow rose was also named for the lovely aviatrix.) London buses, incidentally, were in the nineteenth century not red, as they are now, but yellow. It is the color of the Vaisya, or third mercantile caste, in India. It is also the favorite color in the quillwork designs on moccasins among the American Plains Indians and the color on the jersey of the triumphant cyclist in the Tour de France.

London fog is correctly described in T. S. Eliot's poetry as yellow, which is how it appears in that city by the Thames, for hazes are often yellow, as are night mists, miasmas, noxious effluvia, and eerie contagions once thought to emanate from putrescent matter, swamps, etc., and to float in the air. During the arc-light era of

Illustration by Stasch Ruchets

YELLOW IS THE COLOR OF ROYALTY, INFERIOR DIAMONDS, JINGOISTIC RIBBONS DURING OPERATION DESERT STORM, AND, OF COURSE, PENCILS

Long ago, street lanterns equipped with Welsbach burners, flickering romantically, diffused a mild yellow glow within a restricted radius. One need only look at Louis Anquetin's *Avenue de Clichy*, in which, drawing on a childhood memory, he suffused his view of a Paris street in a deep luminous blue, relieved by the yellow flare of gas lamps on the charcutier's awning.

Our sun is yellow. A nuclear furnace, the dominant body in our solar system in both mass and size, the sun produces its energy by converting atoms of hydrogen into atoms of helium. Energy is generated in a central inner core hotter than hell itself and then carried by radiation to a subsurface zone, where it produces convective motions, the gases of the corona being so hot, the swirls of particles streaming outward so powerful, that it has no clearly defined outer boundary and can actually disturb the magnetic fields of the earth. The sun is classified as a yellow-dwarf star, midway between the largest and the smallest stars and between the hottest blue-whites and the coolest red stars. In astrological studies, in the zodiac, yellow is the color of the Sun ruling Leo. The Temple of Nebuchadnezzar II is devoted to the sun. Nietzsche found clean yellow sunshine in Georges Bizet's music. "The sun is God," whispered painter J.M.W. Turner a few weeks before he died, with the rising rays of it on his face.

Yellow is the Chinese color for royalty. During the Ch'ing Dynasty (1644–1912) only the emperor could wear yellow; it was the special color with which he worshiped the sky. With the Chinese, gold on yellow indicates special happiness, whereas yellow on black signifies an old man's death. In Chinese opera, an actor's face painted yellow means piety. "Yellowfish" was for a long time a vile racial term for illegal Chinese immigrants on the Pacific coast of the United States. Yellow tubes are often used in China in burial ceremonies to pay homage to the earth. At celebrations held at temples of Confucius, say on his birthday, in autumn, young people, playing flutes and [illegible] ant feathers, always wear yellow. Chinese rice wine is yellow [illegible] dense wine with a syruplike consistency reminiscent of sherries, it is buried in earthenware vessels for several years. In ancient China, earthenware pottery, covered in powdered lead on yellow glaze, was often filled with food, which was supposed to nourish those who left for the "yellow plantains"—that is, the next world.

The Yellow River (Huang Ho) in China gets its name from the color as the direct result of the natural movement of the water, which in turmoil causes layers of yellow mud to build up. This mud, called loess, is exceptionally fertile and 650 feet deep in places. The river is extremely turbid, transporting enormous quantities of loess, about two pounds per square foot, depositing it everywhere as alluvium. Ocean color yields clues of other things. Brown or yellow water almost always tells of a river mouth and nearby civilization. I remember my surprise on first seeing the Yellow Sea, which is indeed intensely yellow far out of sight of the estuaries of the Yangtze, the Huangpu, and the Huang Ho. And one can spot the effects of the muddy River Plate more than a thousand miles off Argentina. The normal look of Flanders and much of northeastern France, incidentally, where by November 1915 there were 2 million English casualties, to say nothing of those on the German side, was of a stinking mud that was predominantly an evil yellow.

Archie Goodwin, Nero Wolfe's corpulent, 278-pound detective created by Rex Stout, declared that his favorite color was yellow. Yet it's a strangely acute color. Not many people look very good wearing it. But who can forget Judy Garland in her sunburst-yellow dress singing "You Stole My Heart Away" in the movie *Till the Clouds Roll By*? Blondes and redheads have trouble with yellow. Bette Davis, when she was a young Warner Bros. star, was unique for wearing yellow horn-rimmed glasses. In education, [illegible] to a popular song sung by Tony Or[illegible]

ever, of remembrance, loyalty, and love—and, during Operation Desert Storm in Iraq, of fanatical jingoism in America, where virtually every object in sight sprouted yellow bows, although it was *our* army that killed tens of thousands of Iraqis.

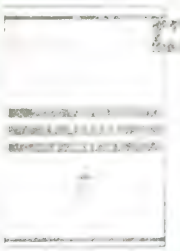
Pencils, of course, are yellow. It is virtually the *sign* of pencilness. Even Scripto's 1980s throwaway plastic pencil—a fake—was yellow! The famous Koh-I-Noor, "the original yellow pencil," which was exhibited for the first time at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893—and still is sold today—was painted golden yellow. (Koh-I-Noors made in 1938 in a factory in Bloomsbury, New Jersey, were given fourteen coats of golden-yellow lacquer, the ends of the pencils were sprayed with gold paint, and all lettering was applied in 16-karat gold leaf.) Pencils most likely were first painted yellow to cover the imperfect wood used. Today, three out of four pencils made are painted yellow.

Why is blond such a coveted color in hair? It was highly desired during the Renaissance. Simonetta Vespucci, [illegible] exceptionally beautiful model for Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* and his *Primavera*, was singled out for her honey-colored hair. Venetian ladies during the nineteenth century counterfeited their hair with dye. Is it the shine, the "flash," the fact that it's so instantly the cynosure of so many eyes? (Gen-

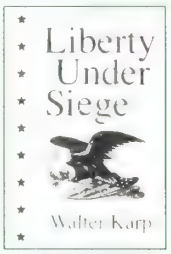
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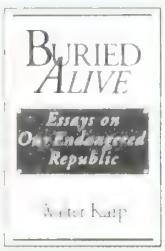
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tlemen prefer blondes, remember, but blondes prefer diamonds. And a very light straw color, by the way, is a raw diamond's commonest tint, though yellow diamonds—which draw their color from nitrogen—are considered inferior to the blue and white varieties.) And is that why blondes are thought to be dim-witted? Easy? Treated like whores in the Middle East? Or is it because truly lovely, iridescent, really natural blondes, the paradigm, are comparatively so rare? What on earth, including cornflowers, butterflies, the rich deep gold on Norwegian bridal pins, or even pure Javanese sunshine was ever as gold as Veronica Lake's hair?

The earth is filled with the color. Yellow sapphires. Wulfenite, a lead molybdate, is yellow. Goethite, an iron hydroxide named after the German poet Goethe, who was a student and collector of minerals, is yellow. As is, of course, native sulfur, known to the ancients as brimstone. (When sulfur crystals are held close to the ear, they can be heard to crackle, on account of the warmth of your hand, because the outer layers expand away from the still-cool interior.) "In the Hall of Gems at the Museum of Natural History in New York, I once stood in front of a huge piece of sulfur so yellow," wrote poet Diane Ackerman, "I began to cry.... The intensity of the color affected my nervous system." In May 1937, during a southwest gale, yellow sand fell in the canton of Basel, Switzerland, so heavily that the countryside appeared swathed in a strange sulfuric fog. The sand was later proved to be from the Sahara Desert a thousand miles away, and it must have been picked up by a simoom to be blown over the Alps at above 12,000 feet. And then there's that other commodity, as the English poet Thomas Hood wrote, "Gold! gold! gold! gold!/Bright and yellow, hard and cold." John Dryden referred to guineas as "yellow boys," and gold British coins known as sovereigns were commonly called "yellows" or "yellow mould."

Eros is often thought of in yellow terms. The Yellow Cat was a well-known brothel in the Strand in

ndon. Yellow is often the color of de uchery, impure love, trashiness. The sic color scheme of the sulfurous m *Last Tango in Paris* is yellow. *Yellow Silk* is currently a popular erotic agazine. An aura of degeneracy has ways been associated with the color, mood of enervation, corruption, a range sort of involuted unhealthy nguor. *The Yellow Book*, a decadent iblication published around the turn the century, was yellow, to suggest a milarity to French novels. Somewhat esaging its unwholesome reputation, s prospectus said it would "have the urage of its modernness, and not emble at the frown of Mrs. Grundy." he drug LSD was also called "yellow nshine"; "yellow jackets" is slang for apsules of Nembutal, a barbiturate; nd many people back in the Sixties asociated the Beatles song "Yellow Submarine"—were lazy surreal opium dreams suggested?—with getting high.

Yellow is often taken as the color of protection and warning. It has burning, highly visible, almost unoverlookable shine or sheen to it. It s, not surprisingly, one of the colors or quarantine, as well as, of course, he general warning color code on highways. A sterilized secondhand mattress always carries a yellow tag. Widows in Guatemala frequently paint their bodies yellow. Diseases in Malaysia are driven away in a yellow ship. In India, brides often wear tattered yellow garments six days before the wedding to drive away evil spirits. On roads as well as railroads, amber lights mean proceed with caution and at reduced speed. For surfers, it is the caution color for rip tides. Yellow indicates caution on the insides of heavy machinery. A solid yellow card in soccer is raised by a referee to indicate that a player has committed a flagrant foul and is being cautioned. Cars in the United States are prohibited from parking in yellow zones. Small collapsible dinghies, used for rescue, are called "yellow doughnuts." Yellow lettering on red means flammable liquid; yellow and purple indicate radiation hazards. And the trucks and equipment of many fire departments in the United States are now a slightly eerie gamboge.



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It is surely for its high visibility that yellow is the color of rain slickers, legal pads, heavy machinery, the Yellow Pages, lines painted on highways, the original Post-it notes, tape measures, the caution flags in motor racing, racetracks, McDonald's golden arches, taxicabs, the round lights on construction sawhorses, the police ribbons used to mark off a crime scene, and, because it is better seen and presumably more easily followed, the long, winding Yellow Brick Road of Dorothy Gale in *The Wizard of Oz*. There is always the alertness of bright efficiency to it. And what student, whether in college or high school, hasn't spent time in carrels Hi-Liting lines in books with yellow felt-tip pens?

Frequently, it is taken to be the color of cowardice, of excessive timidity, of pusillanimity. Malvolio, the weak, sour, and censorious underling of *Twelfth Night*, appears in cross-gartered yellow stockings. By a "yellowbelly" we mean a coward or a person with a "yellow streak up his [illegible]." A "Yellow Belly," which is less widely known, is also a native of the fenlands of East Anglia and Lincolnshire, an allusion to the frogs caught there.) In the nineteenth century, Mexican soldiers almost always wore yellow uniforms, and some say this is the origin, the bigoted one, at least in North America, of the cowardly association with the color. "What's the matter, ya yella?" Ray "Mad Dog" Earle—Humphrey Bogart—defiantly shouts to the cops pursuing him up the rocky hills in the movie adventure *High Sierra*. Speaking of Bogart, Captain Queeg, whom he portrays in *The Caine Mutiny*, is pejoratively nicknamed "Old Yellow Stain" by the disgusted and eventually mutinous crew for the yellow dye-marker he had thrown to indicate [illegible].

Many negative connotations adhere to yellow. It is the color of treachery, malevolence, often treason, deceit, and jealousy. A "yellow-dog contract" is slang for an employee's work contract that forbids membership in a union. To have a "yellow sheet" is to have a criminal record. Yellowbacks were cheap novels, of the sensational kind, so called because of the yellow board bindings so well known in railway bookstalls in the early 1890s. In comic books, yellow is the color that takes away the Green Lantern's power. It is the color of fading bruises, unpopular cats, chlorosis in plants, potato wart, old paper, forbidding skies, dead leaves, xanthoderma, purulent conjunctivitis, dental plaque, gimp lace, infection and pus ("Yellow matter custard, dripping from a dead dog's eye," sings John Lennon in "I Am the Walrus") [illegible] and speed bumps. In the second stage of ringworm, small yellow specks develop, which then spread out circularly. To act yellowly—a legitimate adverb—is often to fail. "Yellow grease" is a low-quality refuse fat obtained from those parts of a hog not used in making lard but used in manufacturing. "Yellow admirals" are merely post-captains in the British Navy promoted to rear admiral on retirement but who never served in that rank.

In tenth-century France, the doors and abodes of criminals, felons, and traitors were painted yellow; in medieval Spain, yellow as part of the executioner's costume stood for the accused victim's treachery. And during the Inquisition in Spain, at an auto-da-fé, victims were robed in yellow, to denote heresy and treason. (Judas in medieval pictures is almost always arrayed in yellow.) Yellow circles made of cord an inch thick had to be worn on the chests of Venetian Jews by an order of 1430. The city of Pisa, a century earlier, had required an O of red cloth, and Rome insisted male Jews wear red tabards and Jewish women red-and-yellow doublets. Red or yellow clothing continued to be required of "pertidious" Jews who lived in the Italian city-states throughout the Renaissance, prefiguring the yellow armband marked with the Star of David imposed on Jews by Nazi law in the 1930s and '40s.

Dermatologically speaking, yellow skin is not a good sign. The infectious tropical disease known as yellow fever, transmitted by a mosquito, makes the skin become colo[illegible] and take on an unhealthy yellow tint. Jaundice is a morbid condition char[illegible]

ered by yellowness of the skin and
es and deep yellow color of the
ne, due to the presence of bile pig-
ent in the blood and tissues. (Some
d jaundice cure.) Yellow spider
fled in butter in England, turnips,
ld coins, saffron in Germany; gold
ads in Russia.) Chronic hepatitis,
neerous, and preceded by exhaustion
nthodermic effect. Hepatic necro-
, or acute yellow atrophy, which is
companied by a rapid decrease in
liver size and overt bleed
ing, is often fatal.

The color yellow in nature is com
lex in beauty and is various in its
odality as the fierce yellow tiger, em
em of power, is different from the
llow bunting, emblem of grace, in
ne skies overhead. Elms, willows,
inkgoes, along with hickories, aspens,
ottonwoods, bottlebrush buckeyes,
in yellow in the tall Canola (a va
ety of rapeseed), has brilliant yellow
owers, and the cultivated fields of
ner in and around Dawson Creek,
British Columbia, are positively
reathtaking. As are the gorse and the
attle of Australia, with their inspir-
ng clouds of yellow blooms. "A Lady's
Bedstraw (*Galium verum*), which, ac
ording to legend, was used as a bed on
which the Virgin Mary rested, gives a
ood yellow color, and, as a yellow
lye, it has often been used in certain
ultures to produce the golden color
o sought after in hair.

Marigolds, dandelions, daffodils,
onquils, primroses, goldenrod, for-
ythia, sunflowers, and broom are all
ursts of yellow. And what of the gay
ellow calendula? The Chrysanthe
ulip? And other tulips—the Bouton
l'Or? The Markgraaf, striped with
arlet? The flowers of melilot, often
sed to flavor beer—and also cheese—
re bright yellow, like scorzonera, a
perennial plant with a root not un
like a carrot, which is highly delectable
when fried in butter. Yellow saxifrage,
or gold dust, is quite lovely, as is yel-
low broom, a sprig of which was worn
by Geoffrey of Anjou, conqueror of
Normandy (1147), as he rode into
battle. There is also the shrub Eu
rom, or gum benjamin, with its yellow
flowers that grow in umbelliferous
clusters. And buttercups. The pre-
vailing idea, by the way, held for years,

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that cows feeding in a field of buttercups produce cream and butter of a yellow color is a purely [illegible]. Cows, in point of fact, show great discrimination in avoiding buttercups, for if they should make a mistake and munch some, they suffer as a consequence, since buttercups hold a vile, acrid juice in their stems that burns and raises blisters, a fluid, curiously enough, sometimes used in folk medicine [illegible] and rheumatic pains.

There is an abundance of lovely yellow vegetables (corn, butternut squashes, yellow onions, wax beans) as well as fruits (yellow pears, bananas, grapefruit, lemons, citrons, pineapples). Our tables shimmer and shine with vegetable oil, egg yolks, mustard, and butter. Pasta is yellow, as are yellow beans and most common cheeses. Cheeses that are bright yellow in color are usually made that way by means of the coloring substance annatto, which has been stirred into the curd. In olden times, this rich color was commonly [illegible] marigold or carrot juice. There are many different colors of cheeses, of course, as there are of beers. And beer, incidentally, in the 1840s was often referred to as "a pint of vell," an abbreviation given to it for its golden color. Galliano is yellow, like brandy and darker mescals and tequilas, with their rich, heady color.

Oh, the glory of yellow paint! Sunlight must almost always be painted with tints slightly prismatic, composed of red, yellow, and blue, that obviate coldness and realize aerial effects. We have the chromatically brilliant yellows, found, for example, in [illegible] *No. 2*. Edouard Manet's *Nude* has a much lighter skin. Then there's the magic iridescence of Georges Braque's *Landscape at La Ciotat*, a painting that, for me at least, virtually defines summer.

I remember being amazed while visiting the Dahlem Museum in Berlin in 1966 and seeing for the first time the impasto of yellow oil paint, slathered on, seeming almost as thick as honey, built up on Rembrandt's *Man with the Golden Helmet*. Look at Pieter Brueghel's *The Harvesters*, one of the few Brueghels in the United States, which as a composition is almost all yellow. And Vermeer? It was, along with blue, his favorite color, metonymically bonded to ambiguities of light and exposure. It demystifies. It is an open and radiant color, almost always the singular color, energizing its wearer, of the jackets, doublets, and blouses of pretty girls in his canvases.

Vincent van Gogh knew many color tricks, especially with his kinetic yellows. A yellow article, for example, placed in a red light, will look red to us and green. This is because yellow can reflect both the red and the green light, and when both are reflected together it looks yellow; but if we place it in a violet light, it will also look black, because yellow cannot reflect anything but red and green—or yellow, which, of course, is a combination of the red and green light.

Van Gogh's paintings dripped with golden light. Consider the rich and buttery yellow ochers of his *Cornfield with Cypresses* (1889). And *Roulin the Postman* (1888). And what about the sunflowers? The yellows are chrome—he almost always used three tones of chrome yellow—and were once undoubtedly much cruder and brighter than their now subdued and harmonious gold. Vincent wrote to his brother, Theo, from Arles in 1890: "All the colors that the Impressionists have brought into fashion are unstable. So there is all the more reason to use them boldly . . . time will tone them down only too well." And he was right, of course. The billiard table in his well-known *Night Café* was once a bright green, as he refers to it in one of his letters. It is now tan, with no trace of green whatsoever.

In Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, the protagonist, Charlie Marlow, a man of sunken cheeks described as having a "yellow complexion," looks at a map of the Belgian Congo, marked with all the colors of the rainbow. "There was a vast amount of red—good to see at any time, because one knows that some real work is done in there, a deuce of a lot of blue, a little green, smears of orange, and, on the East Coast, a purple patch, to show where the jolly pioneers of progress drink the jolly lager-beer. However," reports Marlow portentously, "I wasn't going

it any of these. I was going into the
ow. Dead in the centre. And the
t was there—fascinating—dead
like a snake."

was going into the Yellow.

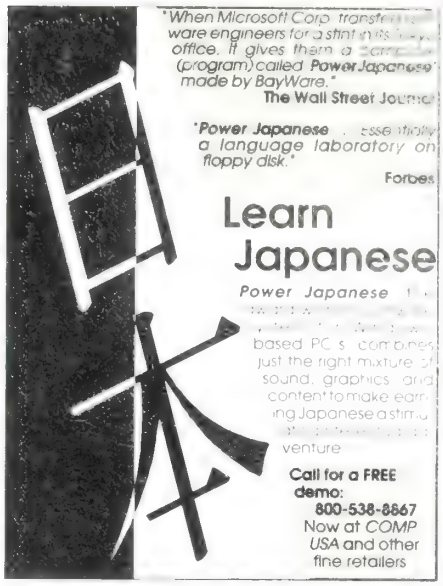
So few colors give the viewer such
eling of ambivalence or leave in
such powerful, viscerally enforced
notations and contradictions. De-
and renunciation. Dreams and
adence. Gold here. Grief there.
intimate mirroring in its em-
matic significance of glory in one
tance and yet, in another, painful,
turbing estrangement. An oppos-
g duality seems mysteriously con-
nt. The Yellow Brick Road. The
eart of Darkness. We go into the
llow, I suppose, each in our own
y, with values attuned, no doubt, to
atever mode of empathy our par-
ular vision aspires. Nevertheless,
w enigmatic a color it seems, be-
g so ready to oblige. ■

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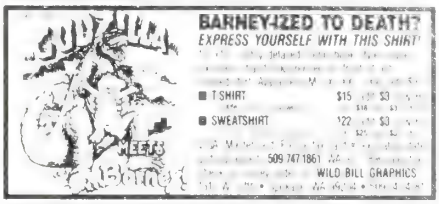
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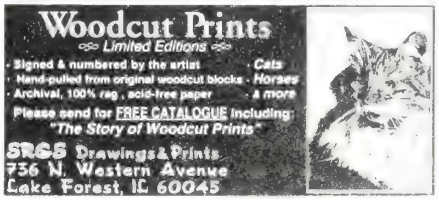
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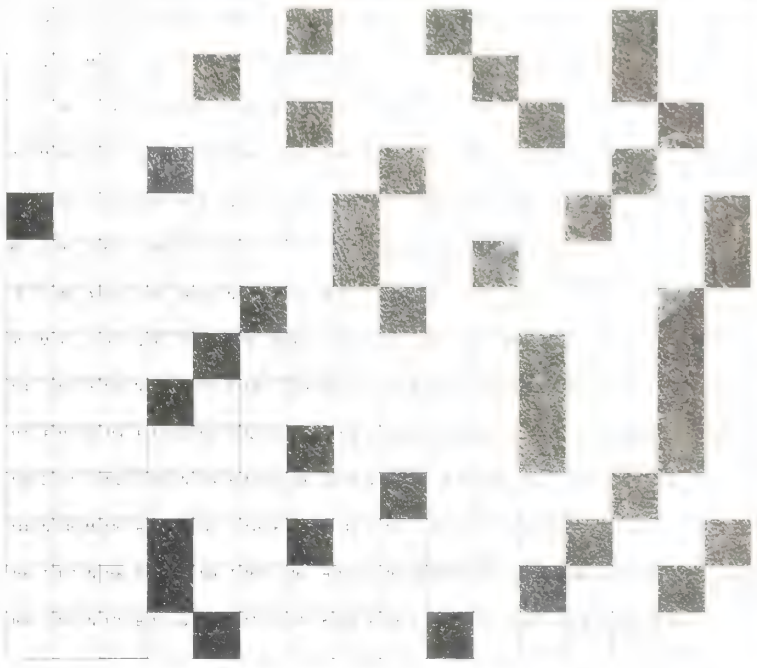
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DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 135

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 58.



WORDS

A. Pessimist, fussbudget — 79 92 21 76 6 33 107 128

B. Swiss Protestant reformer (1484–1531) — 55 95 171 88 5 121 81

C. Consequence, meaning — 135 53 19 71 104 165

D. Early motion-picture theater or jukebox — 2 66 25 36 11 120 130 94

E. Doughnut; lead weight for an angler — 8 119 136 22 32 86

F. Star of 1932 film *The Music Box* (full name) — 70 58 87 164 90 80 117 179

G. Consequence — 122 177 167 158 39 29

H. Fanciful, florid, ornate — 161 34

I. Roués, womanizers, skirt chasers — 143 60 116 31 140 108

J. Geologist (sl.) — 57 178 67 77 169 151 160

K. Dish of potatoes, onions, and lamb, mutton, or beef (2 wds.) — 97 174 142 10 148 168

L. "Where I may oft outwatch ___,/ With that [illegible] great Hermes" (2 wds., Milton, "Il Penseroso")

M. Matchless — 24 111 74 15 102

N. Old cowhands (15th-century, e.g.)

O. Type [illegible] (2 wds.)

P. Left, [illegible] (2 wds.)

Q. Star of 1932 film *The Music Box* (full name)

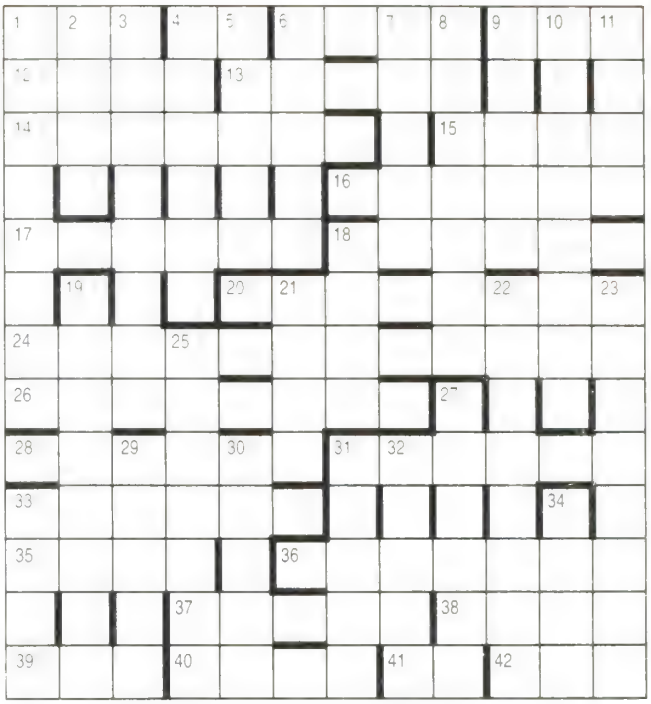
R. Finnic people of northern Norway, Sweden, Finland, etc.

S. [illegible]

T. Cheerful

U. [illegible] — 20 132 78

PUZZLE



Theme of the Month

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby Jr.

This month's theme (24A) is comprised of four theme words. On each, two variations of one sort or another are [illegible].

Clue answers include seven proper names and two words more familiar to puzzle solvers than anyone else (28A, 37A). The solution to last month's puzzle appears [illegible].

ACROSS

1. [illegible]
4. [illegible]
6. *Theme word C* (4)
12. Association of nations spurns the French chill (4)
13. "Pond scum," as derived from original Gaelic (5)
14. One in Personnel is a big chicken (7)
15. Raw deal for lady a god swanned over? (4)
16. One pitching in here, possibly to capture record (6)
17. At last, Janet Reno's mixed some cosmetics (6)
18. It's the form for government, accepting Left mis- [illegible]
24. *This month's theme* (12, two words)
26. *Variation on theme word A* (8)
28. Edible tubers the French put in natural juices (6)
[illegible] opposite" (6)
35. One of the beauties of Scotland, wife leaves Low [illegible]
40. *Variation on theme word B* (4)
41. Man reverts to ... what? (2)

DOWN

1. In the main I'm irate, foolishly getting married (8)
2. The gospel covers vanities (4)
3. He made Italian fiddle with, ruin, gear shifts (8)
4. Judge, hollow and endlessly severe—he's a riot in court (6)
5. Western omelette's first-rate after cooking (5)
6. *Variation on theme word B* (5)
7. Prate circuitously ... come to the point (5)
8. A real bitchy woman—Dotty Hall, etc. (7)
9. *Variation on theme word C* (5)
10. More than one former jockey led some around start of race (8)
11. Pine endlessly for a long time (4)
18. One song turns up here! (4)
19. Kind of trunk Bernhardt almost filled with a dress (8)
21. Vipers heading off stingers (4)
22. Have another go at lying about soldier's enrollment (8)
23. *Variation on theme word A* (8)
25. Playwright's stated deduction for union dues (7)
27. Republican goes into strong depression (6)
29. TV cop, expert in the limits of liability (5)
30. He had a dish named after him: Tripe Byzantine (5)
31. [illegible]
32. Buxom, with taste to go topless (5)
33. I'm backing S&L, being of slender means (4)
34. Chew out a lot (4)

[illegible]


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Letters to the city
Letters to lawyers
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A rendering of the marina project
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Links (a golf game)
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[illegible]



John Author
Musician/ producer

Lyrics
Half-formed songs
A great hook in search of a song
Great song titles
The sound of my writing partner screaming
List of CDs & LPs I own
Performer
WordPerfect
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FileMaker Pro
Parts sources for a '39 Studebaker I'm rebuilding
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Music publishing companies
Studio musicians
Engineers
My girlfriend's letters
Recording studios
Contacts in the industry
Funky sound effects
Spectre (a way of life)
Letters to Mom and Bob
Letters to Dad and Judy

HARPER'S

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ARGUING WITH THE POPE

John Paul II's Stern Sexual Doctrine Prompts an American Catholic to Ask a Few Further Questions About the Discipline of the Spirit and the Pleasures of the Flesh

By Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

◆

SCHOOLYARD BRAWL

A Town Divided by the Cost and Content of Public Education

By Anthony Giardina

THE GREAT SAN DIEGO FIRE SALE

[illegible] Management Plays to Lose

[illegible]evin Baker

Donna Tartt, Bernard Cooper, Hemlock Quarterly's *demise*

◆



Bruce Baber bought his SW2 at Saturn of Farmington Hills.

When it's time to ship out with the fleet, Bruce Bober enlists the help of his Saturn wagon.

When you were a kid, were you ever about what you wanted to be when you grew up? Well, Bruce wasn't content to be a big kid at age eleven when he discovered a love for [illegible]. And he's been immersed in model-making ever since. (His playful [illegible] managed to rub off on his kids.

Not surprisingly, Bruce has [illegible] He happens to be a Saturn as a tinkerer in his career. [illegible] lighting designs—and came in engineer, and his skills at [illegible] Development Group. pretty handy in our Body [illegible] team members, Bruce



When they're not on duty, Lexi and Brian get plenty of use out of Dad's station wagon. (Baseball gear, archery, bicycles and evening their [illegible] friends.)

Like a lot of Saturn [illegible] decided to buy a Saturn of his own. (His wife Diane lobbied for a Saturn coupe.) But since the family's got such a hobby-[illegible] bicycle (and because his fleet had graduated from bathtub size to pool size), Bruce decided what they really needed was the Saturn wagon and its better boat-hauling abilities. (After using it for [illegible], they Diane finds the wagon more than adequate in the [illegible] category. In fact, she says the kids only like to ride in Dad's car now.)

Even so, as much as he likes his Saturn [illegible], we can't say that Bruce is completely satisfied. You see, we still don't offer the Saturn model he *really* wants. [illegible] Which is, of course, a Saturn that floats.



The Saturn SW2

A Different Kind *of* Company. A Different Kind *of* Car.

Bruce Bober is pictured with a 1995 Saturn SW2. Manufacturer's [illegible] options are extra. If you'd like to know more about Saturn and [illegible]



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POUR SOMETHING PRICELESS.

HARPER'S

FOUNDED IN 1850 / VOL. 288, NO. 1727
APRIL 1994

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LETTERS

The Librarian and the Book Thief

Philip Weiss's account of the case of Stephen Blumberg, the man who stole at least 3,000 books from 327 libraries in the United States and Canada ["The Book Thief," Folio, January], tells only half the story. Stephen Blumberg is indeed a bibliomaniac, but to describe him merely as a person bemused by a passion for books, as Weiss so eloquently does, is to give him an air of harmless eccentricity. Such sleight of hand obscures rather than explains Blumberg's psycho-pathology and mitigates his acts. Blumberg should be seen for what he has demonstrated himself to be—a grand-scale kleptomaniac who committed serious crimes.

Weiss's persistence and ingenuity as a reporter (it was a clever move to persuade the inarticulate Blumberg to draw for him) are to be admired. But he casts Blumberg in the role of the victim, and so must therefore find a victimizer. Perhaps confused by librarian Susan Allen's comment that Blumberg should "hang by the neck," Weiss claims that the anger librarians feel toward Blumberg is largely because he represents an evil persona that lurks within them—that side of them that secretly wishes to hoard and protect all of their precious books from desecration by the public. Of all stereotypical depictions of librarians, this is the most tiresome. Librarianship is about access—making collections of books and other mat i als available to a large number of trons. (Weiss himself points out H w easily Blumberg located items he wis d to "liberate." At the University of C gon he simply read entries in a p lished guide to the special collecti until he found what he wanted.) brarians are angry with Blumberg t because he exposed a dirty secret ab t themselves. Rather, they are angr at him for violating a trust. In remov g twenty linear feet of manuscripts fr m Oregon's special collections, Blumb g stole property owned by the peopl of the state of Oregon and held in trus by the librarians of that state-suppor d institution.

There is another, more important issue that Weiss does not mention. Fr m a librarian's point of view, the e nomic value of books and manuscri is far less important than their h toric, social, and cultural value sources from which we discover a d preserve our national heritage. T e study of rare and unique letters a d documents yields many scholarly counts of American history, wh h would be impoverished by the abse e of those materials. The Des Moi s district attorney who prosecuted Blu berg, Linda Reade, saw the importa e of presenting to a jury this elem t of the case. Reade's questioning f Susan Allen about the Nurem g Chronicle of 1493, the last history f the world not to mention Columb s, emphasized the critical importance f preserving and sharing such works f artistry and scholarly achieveme t. Reade sought to counteract t e overemphasis on dollars that char - terized public discussion of the c e

Harper's Magazine welcomes Letters to the

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(Wick Simmons, CEO Prudential Securities)

1

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"You care for the terrible town, yea even for the 'horrible,' as I have overheard you call it, or at least think it, when you supposed no one would know. . . you are ready to follow its hypothetic dance even to the mainland and to the very end of its tether."

In *New York Revisited*, first published in *Harper's Monthly* Magazine in 1906, Henry James observes turn-of-the-century New York in vivid detail. Although written in 1904–1905, when he returned to the United States after living abroad for more than twenty years, the essay is as pertinent today as it was 90 years ago. In this volume, the text appears as it first appeared, unabridged, published, and is enhanced with period illustrations and photographs and an introductory essay by Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*.

FRANKLIN SQUARE PRESS
A DIVISION OF HARPER'S MAGAZINE

ferent from, say, the theft of Rolex watches or BMWs, and that Blum-

University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, Calif.

Do We Need "Leadership Studies"?

Benjamin DeMott sure had fun with the Department of Education's Eisenhower Leadership Development Program ["Choice Academic Pork," December 1993], which dispenses $10 million annually in federal tax dollars to leadership-studies programs. In one swipe, he derides a small government program, leadership studies, and the idea of leadership itself, claiming that the field at programs mainly teach people to avoid democratic politics, ignore "urban disasters," and manipulate consent through some strange brand of populism or elitism.

As the head of a girls' school that has recently introduced a greater emphasis on leadership development, I take strong issue with DeMott's narrow and slanted view of leadership. His ignorance of the subject is as alarming as some of the jargon about "empowerment" and "megaskill" that appears in the applications he judged as a paid government reader of grant proposals. Far more detrimental to society than the Eisenhower Program is the failure to educate young people to take responsibility for their lives and communities, understand the skills of persuasion, and support social justice and higher standards.

When boldly fashioned, education for leadership instills values and vision in a youth population increasingly driven to go along with the crowd and live for the moment. Leadership is as old as Plato, Aristotle, and St. Paul; as current as Martin Luther King Jr. and Margaret Thatcher; and

Benjamin DeMott's illuminatin essay on the food chain of leadershi studies reflects one of the more di turbing trends in American politic and industry—the quest for quick-fix quasi–new age answers to manage ment problems through leadershi courses, management seminars, an best-selling how-to books. Organiz tion problems are often due to ma agement deficiencies—rather tha "leadership" problems—and can b alleviated only if the proper course action is determined and adminis tered. As a working engineer, I hav witnessed the self-destruction of tw preeminent aerospace companies. I both cases, the quick-fix, jargon-heav approach to problem-solving abette their sharp decline.

What is "leadership studies," really The concept of leadership calls t mind classical ideals of personal re sponsibility and independence, ye the formulaic teaching of leadershi tends to absolve the individual of re sponsibility for success or failure; in stead, success or failure is seen to lie i the goodness of the dogma practiced As DeMott acutely observes, basi organizational structures remain un questioned, and "manipulated con sent" replaces independent decision making.

Finally, there is no small irony i the fact that "leadership studies" ca prosper only in an uncritical atmo sphere of academic relativism. Th atmosphere of the various leadership management, and "quality" cults seem decidedly absolutist. The text o methodology or program in questio is viewed as a mystical Excaliber whos virtues are self-evident (to the fortu nate initiates), and any questionin of which is considered either simple minded or wrong-headed. In ou search for an Olympian understanding we seem to have regressed to an era o incantation and burnt offering.

James J. Gorman
Wilmington, Mass.

Fiction, Ad Infinitum

John Barth's story "Ad Infinitum [January] portrays the thoughts of a older married couple as the wife re ceives bad news on the phone an then walks from the house to the gar

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The job market was a seller's market. You could study management, for example, and manage quite successfully by managing–because, well, the world was looking for managers.

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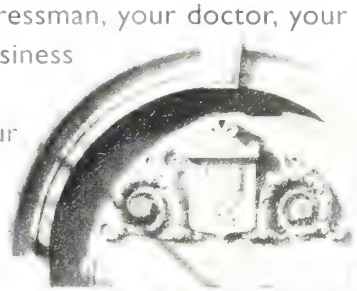
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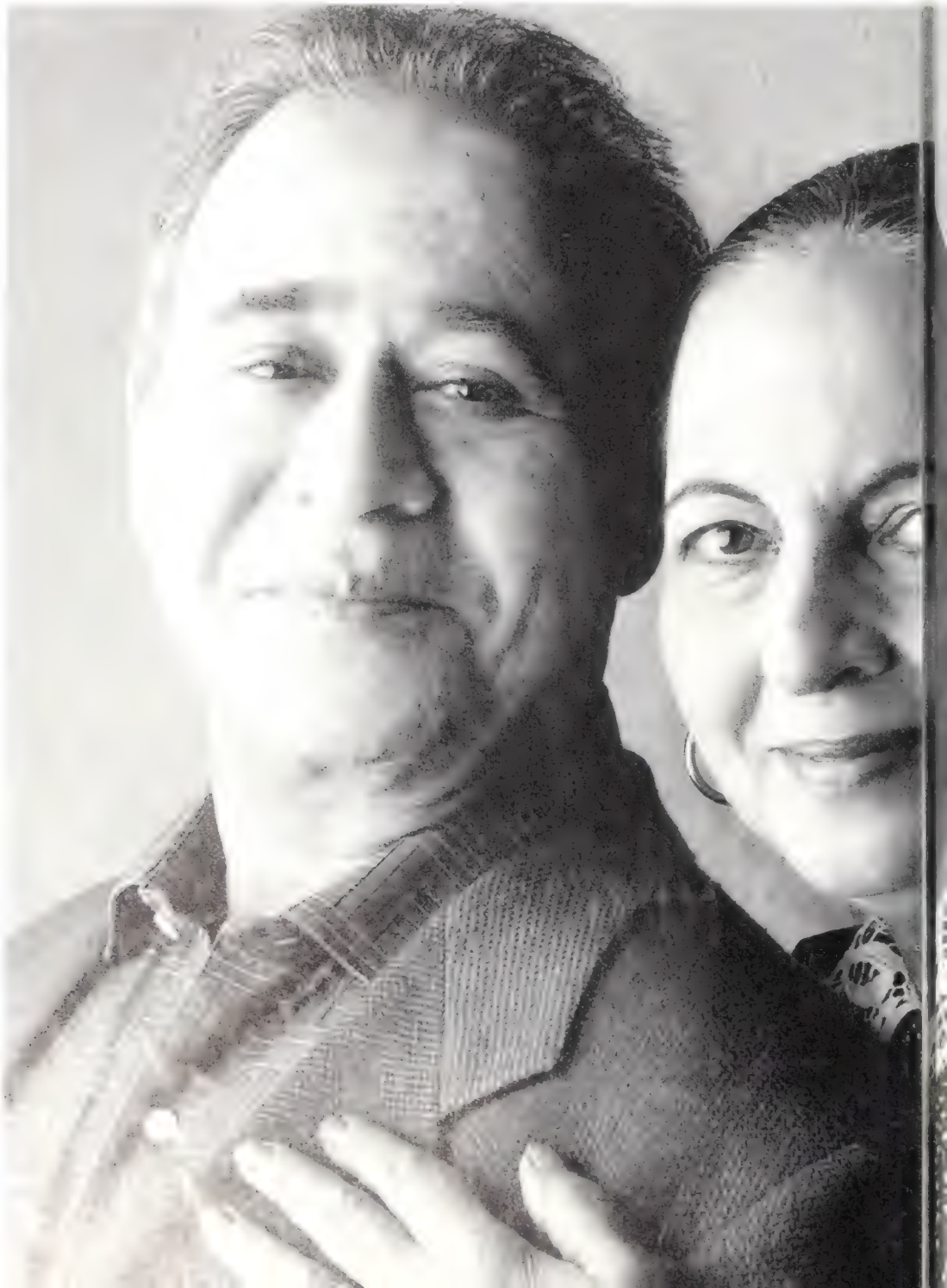
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NOTEBOOK

Burnt offerings

By Lewis H. Lapham

If there were a Super Bowl every day, no American would ever need a sleeping pill.
—Russell Baker

The kind of people who like to name a principal cause for all the country's troubles lately have appeared in the form of violence in Hollywood movies and the effects (said to be) wrought in prior years by the Soviet empire, sexual permissiveness, godless communism, the cocaine trade, and demon rum. The new proposition is as witless as its predecessors, but for the last four or five months it has been all but impossible to escape. Waiting for a table in a New York restaurant last November, I overheard a woman say that she had seen statistics proving the correlation between the box-office receipts of *The Last Boy Scout* and the number of murders taking place on Saturday nights in the South Bronx. Her companion, a smiling and agreeable man in an expensively tailored suit, assured her that he'd never met a movie producer who wasn't either a professional criminal or an amateur psychopath.

Two days later, in the news from Washington, I noticed that both Janet Reno, the attorney general, and Senator Paul Simon (D., Ill.) once again were suggesting that some sort of legal constraint be placed on Hollywood's passion for savage bloodletting and continuous gunfire. Over the next several weeks a chorus of newspaper columnists inveighed against what they called "the culture of violence," [illegible] casting of toxic images into the pure streams [illegible] like-minded sentiments expressed by [illegible] figures supplied by Senator Ernest F. Hollings (D., S.C.) to the effect that the nation's television syndicates present the [illegible] murders a year. I couldn't follow all the lines of all the arguments, but I think somebody said that the country would find its way back to God if only we [illegible] Norris, and I remember somebody else [illegible] impose an excise tax on Hollywood's use [illegible] and cigarettes.

[illegible] I never know what the critics expect Hollywood to put in their place. Within the American scheme of things, the romance of violence is as traditional as the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." The winning of the American West was largely accomplished by greedy and ignorant men in search of something for nothing, governed by their basest instincts, and praised, in the words of John Terrell's [illegible] principles utterly foreign to them." When [illegible] newspaper described the robbery as being "so diabolically daring and utterly in contempt of fear that we are bound to admire it and revere its perpetrators." Two days later the paper compared the gang to the knights of King Arthur's Round Table. Michel Chevalier, an astute and observant [illegible] America, noticed that American society had the morality of an army on the march, an opinion seconded by [illegible] heaviest sacks of spoil who "were held [illegible] in the pulpit, as prototypal of all that [illegible]

Numerous other writers, both [illegible] tale. If they're worth the respect of their horses, both the good guys and the bad guys show contempt for an abstraction as bloodless and chicken-hearted as due process of the law. The archetypal man on horseback (sometimes known as John Wayne or Randolph Scott, at other times taking the alias of John Rambo or Ronald Reagan) rides into the dusty, wooden town (i.e., [illegible] even the most rudimentary attempts [illegible] belong to "the system," which, as every cowhand and aspiring politician knows, is corrupt. The hero appears as [illegible] wicked with a terrible vengeance. No [illegible]

don his boots. All the

t resembles the ruin of Sara-

for nothing other than itself, as if the sight of a knife being driven into the

vise. The producers apparently have

pride, and when I see Sylvester Stal-

the screenwriter and the assistant director arranging swatches of red and orange as if they were flowers or throw

The dialogue strains for a similarly decorative effect. Before remanding their antagonists to oblivion in a swarm

James Bond and Harry Callahan pause briefly for a *bon mot* in the manner of Oscar Wilde. They domesticate the acts of violence by changing them into jokes, and the moviegoing public—

with Raisinets and M&M's—gladly lets go its fear of the world outside the Cineplex in gusts of grateful

What Russell Baker said of the midwinter Super Bowl also can be said of the midsummer bloom of action films. The semi-annual festivals of violence serve as soporifics, not as stimulants, and the critics who think otherwise, who mistake a sophomore's fantasy of suburban revenge for an incitement to urban riot, might do well to reread Shakespeare or Homer. Neither author was squeamish about the depiction of violence, but they had it in mind to describe the actual world of human character and event, not the fairy-tale land of wish and dream.

Maybe it's my age, but if I replay in my mind the sequence of brutal images that I remember seeing in the movies over the last twenty-odd years, I'm struck by their increasingly cartoonish character, which makes it difficult for me to take seriously the fretting of people like Senators Simon and Hollings. Were I to do so, I first would have to grant their prior assumption that the movies under review possess the force of art, that they can awaken in the mind of their audiences emotions strong enough to excite action or thought.

But once divorced from the emotional contexts of human suffering,

ing and power, and it was this weakness of which I was pointedly reminded in late January when I had occasion to read passages of the *Iliad* (assigned as homework to my twelve-year-old son) on the same evening that HBO presented Eastwood in *Pale Rider*—i.e., as Achilles on the old American frontier bringing rough but divine justi to the wayward operators of a Calif nia mining camp. The distance b tween the two variations on the then of vengeance is the distance betwee newsreel footage of the Normandy i vasion and a fashion photograph pr moting Bugle Boy jeans.

Here is Homer, in the translatio by Robert Fagles, describing th death of the warrior Harpalion:

> But Meriones caught him in full retrea
> he let fly
> with a bronzed-tipped arrow, hitting h
> right buttock
> up under the pelvic bone so the lan
> pierced the bladder.
> He sank on the spot, hunched in h
> dear companion's arms,
> gasping out his life as he writhed alon
> [illegible]
> like an earthworm stretched out
> death, blood pooling,
> soaking the earth dark red . . .

Or again, on a different day and i another part of the Trojan plain Achilles killing Polydorus, Hector brother:

> [Achilles] speared him square in th
> back where his war-belt clasped,
> golden buckles clinching both halve
> [illegible]
> straight on through went the point an
> out the navel,
> down on his knees he dropped—
> screaming shrill as the world went blac
> [illegible]
> clutched his bowels to his body, hunche
> and sank.

The lines evoke the emotions of ter ror and fear because Homer employs the imagination as a means of apprehending reality rather than as a means of escaping it. Or, as Bernard Knox puts it in his fine introduction to Fagles's translation, "Men die in the *Iliad* in agony; they drop, screaming, to their knees, reaching out to beloved companions, gasping their life out, clawing the ground with their hands; they die roaring, like Asius, raging, like the great Sarpedon, bellowing, like Hippodamas, moaning, like Polydorus."

The gunmen in the Eastwood film fall like targets in a shooting gallery. We see blood spurt from their bodies, but because we never understand them as men, never see them as anything other than symbolic manifestations of evil dressed in matching greatcoats

that could have been designed by Ralph Lauren, we look at their deaths as clever tropes. I don't think it improbable that Eastwood intended the movie as an epic metaphor. The camera dwells lovingly on the bleak landscape of the high desert, on the deserted street, on the tentative wooden town lost in an immense wilderness under an empty sky, and I imagine that he intended the figure on horseback, identified simply as "the preacher," to stand as an emblem of righteousness. But after all the gunmen have been punished, the town purified, and the preacher gone over the horizon, nothing has been said that might evoke in the audience even the slightest hint of pity or awe.

Homer can vividly imagine the desolation of death, because he so vividly delights in the spring and surge of life. A surprisingly large number of lines in the *Iliad* speak of the joys of peace, of fast ships and wide-ranging flocks, of the generations succeeding one another in a bright and rapturous dance, of young boys in "fine-spun tunics rubbed with a gloss of oil" and young girls "crowned with a bloom of fresh garlands." Meaning to sing not only the wrath of Achilles but also the preciousness of the life that he so wantonly destroys, Homer imparts to his poem the heavy sense of tragic loss, and I read his lines with fear and dread. I come across Thestor, "cowering, crouched in his fine polished chariot,/ crazed with fear," and I remember that as a young newspaper reporter in San Francisco I was surprised by the smell of death in furnished rooms, by the victims of automobile accidents and multiple stab wounds losing command of their bowels, sobbing like children, afraid of the dark, never coming up with a smart remark.

But when I look at Bruce Willis or Mel Gibson annihilating gargoyles, nothing remains of the mess and stink of death. The omission is deliberate. Just as the smiling hosts in the NFL broadcast booths turn fastidiously away from the injured players twisted in pain on the forty-yard line, the manufacturers of synthetic murder delete the sight of human beings reduced to earthworms. Their cameras lift lightly into the air, en route to the next automobile chase or pillar of fire, and although I know that Senators Hollings and Simon like to say that the soul of the nation's youth remains trapped in the burning wreckage with the drug money and the Guatemalan hit men, I think that they underestimated the sophistication of an audience that knows the difference between what is real and what is make-believe. Each of my own children, well before they reached the age of nine, understood *Die Hard* and *Lethal Weapon 2* as video games.

If the Hollywood daydreams lately have become louder and more violent, I suspect that it's because the darker quotients of public anxiety in Bush-time stimulate the need for stronger sedatives. Even during the excitement of the Second World War, the patients lining up at the box office could be comforted with *Casablanca* or *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*. It was enough to know that Humphrey Bogart had been to Europe and could tell the difference between a Nazi, a love song, and a crooked roulette table. Most members of the audience assumed



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that if they had been blessed with a similar degree of sophistication, they, ... and leave Claude Rains standing in ... of usual suspects. Neither they nor Bogart thought it necessary to carry a semi-automatic rifle or practice the art of kick boxing. By 1950 the United ... supremacy in the world, and the Americans who sallied bravely forth to the ... and Central America and Indochina) traveled on passports stamped with the visas of omnipotence.

I don't know how many readers will remember Danny Kaye as Walter Mitty, but I think of the movie as the ... Frankly presented as daydream (timid milquetoast falls asleep and imagines himself performing heroic feats of derring-do), the movie anticipates the ur... grand tour of the world's leading resorts, collecting beautiful women as if they were baseball cards, knowing how to play with the most dangerous toys in the Soviet and American arsenals, warding off the evil spirit of nuclear war. But although not unacquainted with sinister plots, Bond is still skittish about the sight of blood. He carries a gun, but he seldom has a use for it, preferring instead the hand-to-hand struggles on the edge of a cliff or a knife.

By 1980 the times had changed, and most of the important protagonists in the Hollywood action films had become paramilitary figures, moving furtively through always hostile terrain, heavily armed with 9mm pistols and semi-automatic rifles, sometimes with antitank weapons and grenade launchers. Unlike Bogart, Mitty, or Bond, the newly arrived soldiers of for... angry at anybody and everybody to whom they could assign the fault for the world's evil and on whom they could ... ment. Their enemies were so many and so various ... Colombian drug lords, Los Angeles street gangs, wardens of North Vietnamese prisons, Irish terrorists, etc. ... that it was no longer possible to ascribe the killing to either a patriotic or an ideological motive. Clearly something had gone wrong in the world and if the American public was becoming increasingly fearful of both it ... and its politicians, then the cinematic palliative needed to be strengthened and re-enforced. The theatergoing audience couldn't drift quietly off to sleep unless it could hear the distant sound of gunfire in the forest on the other side of the freeway, reassured as if by a lullaby that John Rambo or Harry Callahan (or Mel Gibson or Charles Bronson or Chuck Norris) was shooting down the shadows in the trees.

The television networks preach a corollary sermon, but not, as the critics would have it, in their entertainment divisions. Over the last several years, the children's hour (a.k.a. prime time) has been largely occupied by sitcoms or by police dramas that prefer the uses of sex to those of violence. It is the news programs that bring the specters from the abyss—the news programs and their "reality-based" imitations set in bas-relief against advertisements for Chanel perfume and Caribbean resorts. Like the illustrations in a fifth-grade reader, the sequence of scenes teaches the late-twentieth-century American catechism: first, at the top of the news, the admonitory row of body bags being loaded into ambulances in Brooklyn or south Miami; second, the inferno of tenement fires and burning warehouses; third, a sullen procession of criminals arraigned for robbery or murder and led away in chains. The text of the day's lesson having been thus established, the camera makes its happy return to the always smiling anchorwoman, and so—with her gracious permission—to the preview of heaven in the airline and travel advertisements. The homily is as plain as a medieval morality play or the bloodstains on Don Johnson's Armani suit—obey the law, pay your taxes, speak politely to the police officer, and you go to the Virgin Islands on the American Express card. Disobey the law, neglect your insurance payments, speak rudely to the police, and you go to Kings County Hospital in a body bag.

It is the business of the mass media to sell products—their own as well as those of their clients and sponsors—and the critics who complain about the

ceaseless shows of violence miss the comparison to the cocaine trade. Whether staged as news or entertainment, synthetic violence is a drug, which, happily for its suppliers, returns a handsome rate of profit in all the major markets. Among the urban poor (i.e., people who might be inclined to take up arms against the state), the bloody anodynes check the fever of non-specific rage. Draw off the pestilent air of perceived injustice through the vents of wish and dream, and it is less likely to seek expression on a commuter train or in an election. Among the American suburban middle classes (i.e., people increasingly hard-pressed to maintain their status as residents of the increasingly precarious American Eden, who believe themselves surrounded by enemies of infinite number), the dreadful images confirm the impression of a world beyond the shopping mall that resembles a pitiless desert or a malevolent wilderness. Instill in such people the habit of fear, and it is more likely that their generous and charitable impulses will turn to stone.

Both states of paralysis serve the interests of a corporate media that hopes for nothing better than passive compliance on the part of people shopping for the intimations of immortality. Any doubts that I may have entertained on the point were dispelled some years ago by a well-placed executive at CBS. I had asked him why the networks make so little attempt to broadcast anything other than fairy tales, and he in turn asked me if I ever looked at television.

"Not very often," I said.

"Of course not," he said. "Neither do I. I would hope that we have something better to do."

The mass audience, he said, consisted mostly of people who didn't have anything better to do, who lacked either the will or the travel money to walk out their own front door. Why deprive them of their only means of escape? Why trouble them with the pain of doubt or the labor of thought? Let them feed on wishes and dreams, and they will repay the kindness by looking at more television, swelling the sum of the Nielsen ratings, contributing their pauper's mite to the general state of commercial prosperity and sociopolitical well-being. ■

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HARPER'S INDEX

Rank of tax increases, among the reasons Americans cite for having not achieved the "American dream" : 1
Average percentage turnover in state legislatures following a tax increase : 23
Average percentage turnover following no tax increase : 22
Total value of the 96,000 refund checks returned to the I.R.S. as undeliverable last year : $50,000,000
Number of copies of the Walsh report sold by the Government Printing Office since its release last January : 500
Expiration date of the new special prosecutor's lease on a Little Rock office for the Whitewater investigation : 1/21/97
Points by which President Clinton's January approval rating exceeded that of Ronald Reagan after one year in office : 5
Percentage change, since 1992, in *New York Times* articles mentioning the "information superhighway" : +2,025
Perecentage of all layoffs announced by U.S. companies in January that were in telecommunications : 41
Last year in which the German unemployment rate matched current levels : 1945
Percentage of Germans who believe the world would be a better place "if everyone were like the Germans" : 21
Percentage of Russians who believe the West is attempting "to weaken Russia with its economic advice" : 54
Year in which Vladimir Zhirinovsky applied for a visa to emigrate to Israel : 1983
Year in which Rush Limbaugh voted in a presidential election for the first time : 1988
Ratio of the value of contracts signed by Michael Jackson in 1993 to that of contracts canceled : 7:1
Estimated portion of Shaquille O'Neal's 1993 income he earned by playing basketball : 1/5
Number of the four most highly paid sports figures worldwide last year who are race-car drivers : 2
Estimated number of people worldwide who live on less than $1 per day : 1,000,000,000
Chances that a U.N. member paid its dues on time last year : 1 in 12
Chances that a human being is a refugee, worldwide : 1 in 125
Ratio of the number of casualties in the 1988 Armenian earthquake to the number in Los Angeles in January : 492:1
Ratio of the force of the Armenian earthquake to that of the Los Angeles earthquake : 1:1
Change in the number of jobs in Florida since Hurricane Andrew struck in 1992 : +214,000
Number of women a Texas company fired last year after O.S.H.A. ordered it to build more women's rest rooms : 30
Chances that an American who commits murder in his or her workplace will finish by committing suicide : 1 in 4
Price paid at auction last fall for the ice pick used by Sharon Stone in *Basic Instinct* : $4,125
Number of the Best Actor/Actress Oscar nominees since 1986 who played a mentally or physically disabled person : 9
Number of movie deals proposed to Nancy Kerrigan in the week after she was assaulted in January : 35
Pairs of tickets to a Bette Midler concert given to Californians last year in exchange for their guns : 4
Number of *Married . . . with Children* scripts about TV violence rejected by the Fox network last year : 2
Percentage of editors of U.S. daily newspapers who say that an advertiser has tried to influence their content : 90
Percentage who say the advertiser was successful : 37
Number of wiretaps and listening devices authorized by law-enforcement agencies in the U.S. each month last year : 77
Value of the federal government's stockpile of "medicinal" opium and morphine : $21,800,000
Amount the government will spend this year to "upgrade" their supply : $1,100,000
Amount the federal government spent on pickle research last year : $277,000
Average number of sesame seeds on a Big Mac : 178
Percentage increase in White House Domino's Pizza orders each day Hillary Clinton is out of town : +18
Total tax deductions Bill Clinton has claimed since 1986 on charitable donations of used underwear : $22

Figures cited are the latest available as of February 1994. Sources are listed on page 82
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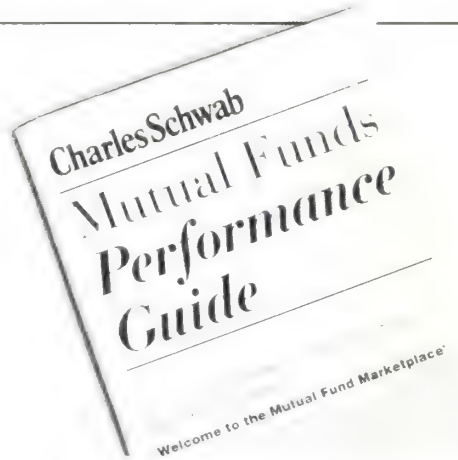
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READINGS

[Essay]

WHAT'S WRONG WITH WELFARE REFORM

Adapted from The Homeless, *by Christopher Jencks, to be published this month by Harvard University Press. Jencks is John D. MacArthur Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University and the author of* Rethinking Social Policy, *among other books*

Every president since John Kennedy has tried to change the welfare system, and none has accomplished much. But when Bill Clinton promised during his campaign to "end welfare as we know it" by creating a system in which welfare recipients would have to get a job within two years, he aroused higher expectations than any of his predecessors. Now he has become a prisoner of those expectations. As it becomes clear to the nation that Clinton's pledge will not cut our welfare budget but could in fact almost double it, his political resolve will be tested. The resulting showdown will have an impact on more than Clinton's political fortunes; it could also imperil the nation's poor.

When the President and Congress talk about "welfare," they mean Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the program that supports single-parent families. When we created AFDC in the 1930s, most Americans thought that single mothers—like married mothers—should stay home with their children. But since 1960, the public's views have changed dramatically. Today, most married mothers hold at least a part-time job. As a result, most people think single mothers should hold paying jobs as well. A recent Associated Press poll found that 84 percent of American adults favored a work requirement for welfare mothers, including mothers with preschool children. This preference was shared by blacks and whites, rich and poor, Democrats and Republicans.

Given the public mood, no politician has a good word to say about welfare. But despite decades of anti-welfare rhetoric, the current welfare system has proven remarkably durable. Congress adopted the first set of reforms aimed at getting recipients "off the welfare rolls and onto payrolls" in 1967, and has pursued this goal ever since. But none of the resulting legislation has had much effect. AFDC still discourages mothers from working outside the home; if welfare recipients take a job, their benefits are reduced by almost a dollar for every dollar they earn. The result is predictable: only about half of all single mothers have regular jobs of any kind.

The reason welfare reform never works is quite simple. Welfare is the cheapest system yet devised for taking care of children whose parents do not live together and whose mothers have few job skills. AFDC cost taxpayers about $24 billion in 1992. A good alternative would cost almost twice as much.

For Clinton's "two years and then out" program to work, there must be jobs available to welfare mothers. These jobs either must pay enough for women to support their families on their own or must be supplemented by government programs. For most women on welfare, jobs like these simply do not exist. Many single mothers are unable to find even minimum-wage jobs in the private sector. Some live in places with high rates of unemployment, where even rela-

so depressed, so unreliable, or so incompetent that no private employer would keep them around long, even in a minimum-wage job. If we want these mothers to work, we will have to offer them public-sector jobs. Because such jobs require supervision and administration, they typically cost about twice as much as AFDC. In theory, these costs are partly offset by the value of what the workers do, but governments are seldom adept at using such workers to cut their other costs.

In addition, when single mothers work, somebody else has to care for their children. In 1990, the average child-care center charged $76 a week for one child. Women who cared for a child in their home typically charged $64. For a single mother with two young children, therefore, all-[illegible] cost about $250 a month. Only five states gave AFDC mothers with two children that much to cover *all* the costs of raising their children. In most states, cash AFDC benefits were less than $400 a month.

Conservatives often argue that single mothers should pay for their own child care, just as most other people do. But the typical welfare mother can expect to earn only about $5 an hour when she finds a job. Child care will usually cost her at least $3 an hour for two children. That means her net earnings will be about $2 an hour, which is not enough to support even a single adult, much less a family.

Lack of realism about what it costs to raise a family is at the root of our inability to reform welfare. AFDC usually gives a mother with two children $300 to $400 a month in cash, plus food stamps and Medicaid. As a result, most legislators have convinced themselves that single mothers can easily live on such sums. That delusion leads to the equally fanciful idea that welfare mothers could somehow make ends meet if they [illegible].

When the Census Bureau asks welfare mothers about their household budgets, they usually report that their expenditures substantially exceed their reported income. The bureau, however, makes no attempt to explain the gap. In an effort to understand this discrepancy, Kathryn Edin, a Rutgers University sociologist, and Laura Lein, a [illegible] anthropologist, interviewed several hundred single mothers in Cambridge, Massachusetts; Charleston, South Carolina; Chicago; and San Antonio between 1989 and 1[illegible]. Unlike Census Bureau employees, they spent a lot of time [illegible] the people they interviewed. When they did this, a fuller picture emerged of the economics of welfare.

Edin and Lein found that urban welfare mothers typically needed about twice as much cash as they received in welfare payments. They got the ex-



From Tibet: Reflections from the Wheel of Life, *a book of photographs by Thomas L. Kelly, with text by Carroll Dunham and Ian Baker, published by Abbeville Press. The boys above, who are dancing to the Hindi song "I Am a Disco Dancer," were photographed at the Tashi Ling Refugee Camp in India. Kelly, an American, has lived in Nepal since 1978.*

tra money—which they did not report to the welfare department—partly from off-the-books jobs and partly from family members, boyfriends, and the fathers of their children. Few mothers lived well. Most were doing without things that almost all other Americans regard as necessities. Still, these mothers' budgets were always larger than their AFDC checks, which averaged about $6,500 a year, including food stamps. Hardly anyone got by on less than $10,000 a year, and most spent at least $12,000.

When single mothers worked, they needed even more money, because they had to pay for transportation to their jobs, appropriate clothing, child care, and medical care. (Their jobs hardly ever provided medical insurance, and even if coverage was available, workers usually paid a large part of the cost.) Setting aside taxes and social security, working mothers with two or more children typically spent $15,000 a year.

For a single mother to make $15,000 a year, she must earn at least $8 an hour. Unskilled women can seldom make that kind of money. Furthermore, two decades of study have shown that although job training increases a welfare mother's chance of finding a job, it seldom has much effect on her hourly wages. So even if today's welfare mothers find full-time jobs, they are likely to earn around $10,000 a year (the equivalent of $5 an hour). If jobs are scarce, as they often are, many will earn less.

A few single mothers do manage on such meager earnings, but most of them are getting substantial help from others. One woman may get free child care from her sister, another may receive regular child support from her children's father, and a third may live with her parents. Women who have unusually low budgets also tend to have other advantages, such as a healthy family that requires little medical care or a job within walking distance. Those who are not so fortunate need outside help to close the gap between what they can earn and what they must spend.

Clinton's promise has left him—and the country—with three options. The first is to stick to his pledge to kick families off welfare after two years and fully fund a system that would ensure that single mothers who were willing to work could support their families. Such a program would probably cost an additional $20 billion a year. It would have to include public-sector jobs, subsidized child care, and other government support. The Clinton Administration has been trying to move in this direction. Last year it ex-

[illegible] Clinton is trying to create a health-[illegible] system in which everyone will receive medical attention. But it has yet to propose a system of child-care subsidies that would make it possible for every single mother to work. And it has yet to tackle our current patchwork of housing subsidies, which give some poor families $800 or more a month but give the majority nothing and force some to live in shelters.

The second option is to increase spending modestly, put a two-year time limit on welfare, but only allow a state to terminate a woman's AFDC benefits if it found her both child care and some kind of a job, either in the public or the private sector. If Congress adopts that approach, few women and children are likely to suffer serious harm from these "reforms." But if appropriations for child care and public-service jobs remain modest, as they surely will in the near future, the welfare rolls will not shrink much either.

A reform of this kind would encourage the most employable welfare recipients to work and let the rest remain on welfare. In the end, that is probably the most prudent use of taxpayers' money. Such a program would cut the AFDC rolls a little and enable us to learn a lot about the feasibility of making more mothers work, without making anyone worse off. But it will most definitely not "end welfare as we know it." The public is likely to consider this another broken promise, and another signal that the "welfare problem" is unsolvable.

The third option is for Congress to impose a two-year time limit without requiring states to provide child care or guarantee jobs. If that happens, most single mothers will find ways to survive. But for some the results are likely to be tragic. Little as we like it, welfare is the price we now pay for keeping single mothers and their children together. If we put a time limit on welfare without creating a viable alternative, more families will break up. Some mothers will send their children to live with relatives. Others will move in with men who abuse them or their children. More will show up in shelters. In due course, more children will also end up in foster care. This obviously is not what President Clinton intends. Yet the political momentum that he has set in motion with his rhetoric about "ending welfare as we know it" has made these possibilities much more likely. Unless he demonstrates the political resolve to follow through on his promises with the commitment they require, he may have a lot of misery to answer for.

ROCK-A-BUY BABY



IN MY BACKYARD? SURE!

From "Learning to Love the W'aste," by Trebbe Johnson, in the January/February issue of New Age Journal.

When I learned that my rural community in northeastern Pennsylvania was under consideration as a site for a low-level nuclear-waste dump, my first reaction was to vow to block the project. "No way," I swore, along with my neighbors, who were equally terrified at the prospect of living around the bend from a mounting repository of radioactive material.

"If they build it here, I'm putting the house up for sale," a friend told me as the battle heated up. "And if anyone asks why, I won't say, because nobody will come near this area if they know the truth." Although I share that frustration, lately I have been considering another, more chal-

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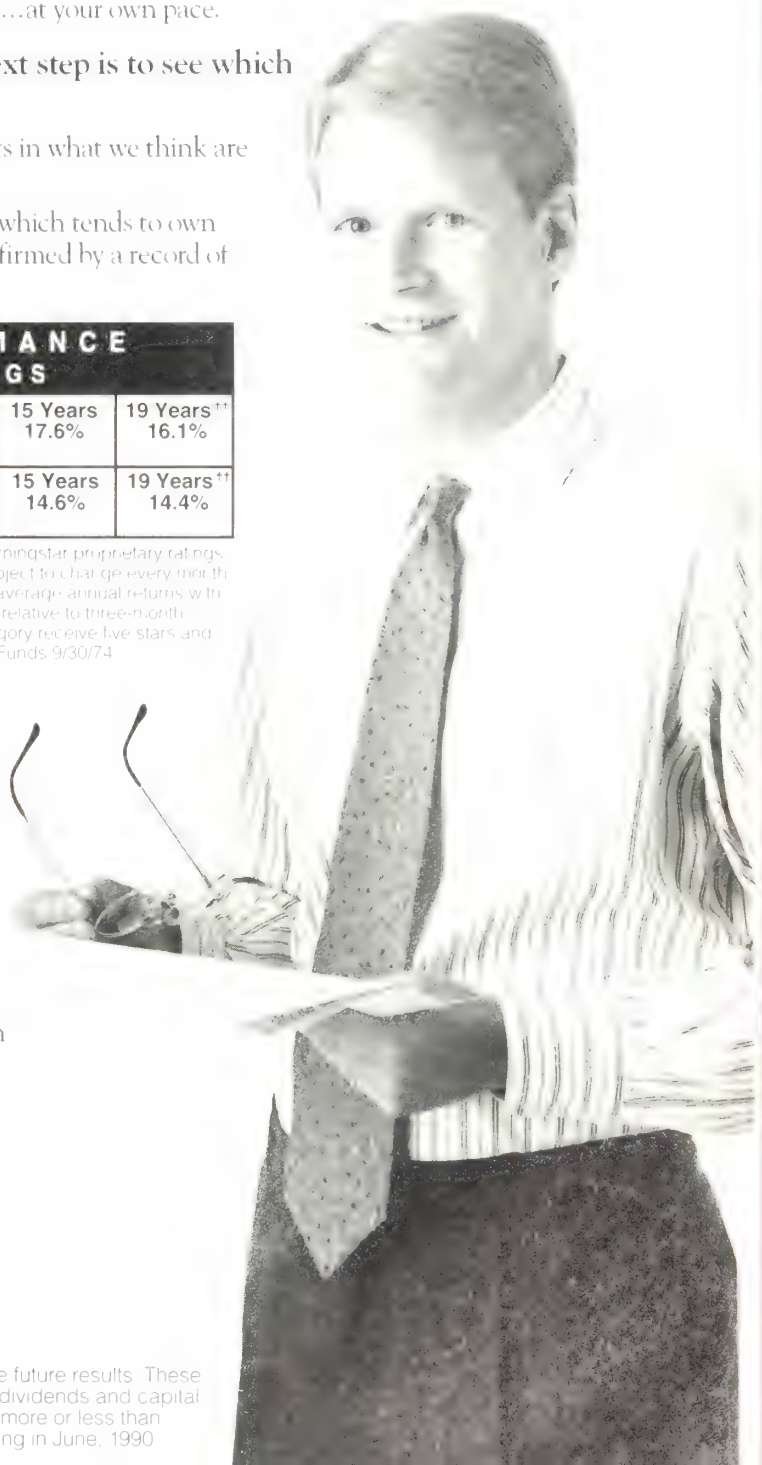
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create it. No, my community isn't powered by nuclear energy, and I don't work in an industry that

I like to think of my lifestyle as environmentally conscious, it's actually not all that pure. My week. In the summer we pick fresh vegetables and fruits from our garden, but in the winter we buy them from health food stores that truck them east from organic farms in California. And as a that requires the felling of trees, even when I mation about the half-life of isotopes and the reliability of concrete versus steel storage con-

I take inspiration from the story of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, who chose to delay nirvana and remain among civilization until all other sentient beings had attained enlightenment. In his determination not to reach out his hand to help, he sacrificed his own rest and comfort.

I still lack the courage to say that I embrace the waste facility and will cease my fight to keep it out of my community. And yet, should our area be chosen, I pray that I will have the courage not my new neighbor. Only by doing so can we usher waste back into the circle of life.

Writer and deep ecologist Joanna Macy has envisioned "surveillance communities" forming around nuclear facilities, centers where the monitoring and repair of equipment and the education of citizens would become a sacred responsibility passed down from one generation to the next. I myself imagine a solemn ceremony taking place each year on the anniversary of the date our nuclear-waste dump opened. We citizens would burn candles, pray, and sing as we joined hands all around the 500-acre site to consecrate our commitment to shared vigilance.

Only by cherishing the waste can we honor the earth and our awesome responsibility as its caretakers.



[Testimony]

ANDY WARHOL: FOURTEEN MINUTES AND COUNTING

From testimony given in January by André Emmerich, a dealer in contemporary art, in New York State Surrogate's Court. Emmerich was testifying as an expert witness on behalf of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the chief beneficiary of the Warhol estate, in a suit filed against the foundation by Edward Hayes. Hayes, who served as the estate's lawyer for six years, is suing for $11.7 million in unpaid fees; he was to be paid 2 percent of the total value of the estate. Hayes claims that the estate is worth $827 million; in order to limit its settlement with Hayes, the foundation argued that because Warhol's popularity may soon wane, the estate is worth only $220 million. The case was heard by Judge Eve Preminger.

HON. EVE PREMINGER: Is there an artist who, in your opinion, could profitably be compared with Warhol?

ANDRE EMMERICH: If we go back in history, we come to artists who in their time were as fashionable and acclaimed as Warhol was in his time but who subsequently went through periods of total oblivion—John Singer Sargent, Helleu in Paris, Boldini, Meissonier. These are all artists who in their time were the most fashionable, the most popular artists, who within the span of oblivion, to be rescued perhaps a decade or a few decades down the line.

HON. PREMINGER: I gather from what you are saying—insofar as one can predict anything in the market—you are predicting a period of oblivion for Warhol?

EMMERICH: I wouldn't want to predict. Crystal balls are risky. I do want to point out that there certainly is the potential, particularly in the fashionable artist of his period. By definition, what is fashionable today will be old-fashioned tomorrow. Warhol's



The collage above, by R. Ernest Greenwell, depicts the Wanaksink Lake Clubhouse in Rock Hill, New York; it is composed of more than 3,500 pieces of canceled postage stamps. Greenwell, a stamp collector in Wantagh, New York, cuts stamps into small strips and pastes them together to form collages. His "stamperafts" were featured in the October 1995 issue of The American Philatelist, *a monthly about stamp collecting published in State College, Pennsylvania.*

art, the art for which he was most famous, consists of pop art, which is the art of using images of daily products like Brillo boxes, Coca-Cola bottles, and Campbell's soup cans, which owe their freshness, their liveliness, their popness to the fact that twenty years down the line, the Brillo box will no longer be the same. Coca-Cola bottles have already begun to disappear. Campbell's soup labels will change. That pop aspect, that freshness, will no longer be so fresh.

The other aspect of Warhol, portraits of now-famous people—Marilyn Monroe, Jackie O., Elvis Presley—does anybody today want photographs of Theda Bara or Edith Wilson [the wife of Woodrow Wilson] or Alice Roosevelt Longworth or Marion Davies?

I think it's a precarious future, and I would simply want to emphasize that to predict the market for Warhol ten, twenty years down the line is very risky.

HON. PREMINGER: I don't want to put words in your mouth, but, according to what I assume, there is more risk in Warhol than in [Roy] Lichtenstein, although he, too, is a pop artist?

EMMERICH: I think possibly so. It's always difficult to predict what our children will think of the art we like. But we know that what they think will be different from what we think today.

[How to]

TIPS FOR THE COLD WAR ASSASSIN

From a memo on various assassination methods sent in November 1949 by a consultant for the CIA to one of the agency's intelligence officers. The memo appeared in an article by Alexander Cockburn in the February 15 issue of Counterpunch, *a Washington, D.C., newsletter.*

I regret taking so long to supply you with my thoughts on the problem that you raised when I saw you last. Rather than attempt to organize a logical outline of all of the means by which the type of activity you mentioned might be accomplished, I am simply setting down the means that I think might be most efficacious.

I believe that there are two chemical substances that would be useful. One, sodium fluoroacetate, when ingested in sufficient quantities to cause death, does not cause characteristic pathologic lesions and does not increase the amount of fluorine in the body to a degree that can be detected. The other that I have in mind is tetraethyl lead, which, as you know, could be dropped on the

skin in small [illegible] to bring no local lesion; [illegible] evidence of [illegible] lead would be present.

[illegible] could be put into a relatively [illegible] small room with a block of carbon dioxide [illegible] that death would result and that there would be no chance [illegible] detected.

Another possibility would be to expose the entire individual to X ray. When the whole body is exposed, a relatively small amount of radiation is sufficient to produce effects that would lead to death within a few weeks.

If it were possible to subject the individual to a cold environment, he would freeze to death when his body temperature reached around 70°; in such cases, no anatomic lesion [appears] that is diagnostic.

There are two other techniques that I believe should be mentioned since they require no special equipment besides a strong arm and the will to do such a job. These would be either to smother the victim with a pillow or to strangle him with a wide piece of cloth, such as a bath towel. In each case, there is no specific anatomic change to indicate the cause of death, though there may be serosal petechiae and marked visceral congestion that would suggest strangulation.

I hope you will forgive the random way in which I have set these things down. I am sure that there are many exotic alkaloids and other chemical substances that might be used, but I am sure you have available as much information (or intrinsic knowledge) as I have. If I can be of any further aid to you, I hope you will call on me.

NOT WITH A BANG

From a list of 10,660 entries submitted last year to the Big Bang Challenge, a contest organized by Sky & Telescope *magazine to "rename the Big Bang." The contest's judges were unable to find a worthy replacement for Big Bang among the entries, according to Carl Sagan, one of the judges, "There's nothing [in the list] that even approaches the phrase 'Big Bang' in felicity." Sky & Telescope is published monthly in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

[illegible]
[illegible]
A Star is Spielberg: George Lucas Production
Beautiful Bounty
Bob
Bouquet of Beginnings
Bursting Star Sack
Creation of a Universal Dream
[illegible]
[illegible]
Hey, Looky There at That
Hot Hurl
Immense Blossoming
Infinity Forever
[illegible]
Jiffy Pop
Leisurely Cosmic Expansion
[illegible]
[illegible]
Purse Opened to Reveal Universe
[illegible]
Stupendous Space Spawning
Super Historic Change
[illegible]
The Crescendo of a Sound
The Expanding Godhead
The Instantaneous Beginning of Yesterday, Today,

[illegible]

[Advice]

GO, FISH

From "Euthanasia in Fish," by Frank G. Anderson, in the January issue of Freshwater and Marine Aquarium Magazine, *a monthly "dedicated to the tropical fish enthusiast" and published in Sierra Madre, California. Anderson is a regular columnist for the magazine.*

"Drop him down the toilet!"

Flush. Gurgle, gurgle, and a moment later the sound of recharging water announces that another fish has bitten the dust.

This scene is repeated more often than we like to admit. Somehow it is reassuring to see a troubled fish with ugly white fungus and ripped fins swirling down into the smooth whirlpool vortex of a home toilet. Immediately after the flush comes the feeling that we did the right thing.

The intentions behind this act may be innocent and well-meaning, but the method of putting a fish down by flushing is not as humane as it seems. It results in pain and further torture for a defenseless specimen that, if it had a vote, would opt for proper euthanasia: quick, easy, and as painless as possible. Unfortunately for the fish, what is quick, easy, and as painless as possible for a fish does not always mesh with what is easy for



"Maldive anemone fish and carpet anemone," by Youji Ohkata. From Under the Sea, *a collection of Ohkata's photographs taken around coral reefs in the Pacific and Indian oceans. The maldive anemone fish shown above is taking refuge from its predators in the tentacles of a carpet anemone. The carpet anemone typically stings small fish with its tentacles, envelops them, and then digests them; the maldive, however, secretes a mucus that makes it immune to the carpet anemone's sting.* Under the Sea, *which includes text by Leighton R. Taylor, is published by Chronicle Books, in San Francisco.*

the hobbyist. It's much simpler for most of us just to flush the fish, because we believe that it is going to a gentle death.

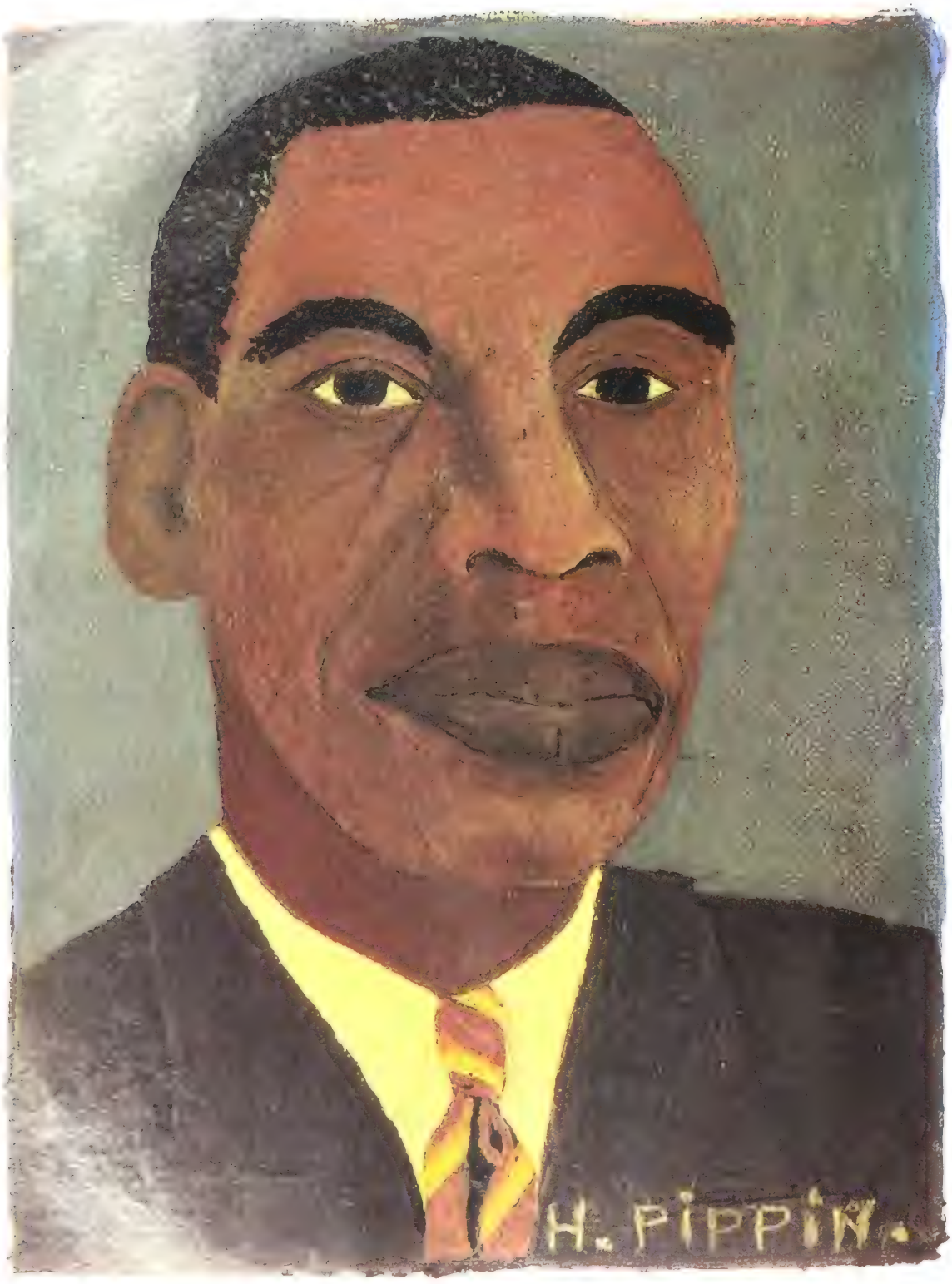
But nothing could be further from the truth. When a fish enters the labyrinth of home drainpipes, it encounters physical barriers like valves and elbows, corrosion, and water turbulence. It may find refuge in an isolated pocket until the next flush, but the material that accompanies that flush is more than the fish can survive.

Before the hobbyist considers euthanasia for fish, he or she should make prevention the first order of business. Many of the diseases and parasites that tropical fish succumb to can be eliminated or, at least, decreased to comfortable levels through preventive maintenance, isolation, and gradual acclimatization. I don't know how many times I've heard, "I didn't notice anything wrong until he floated to the top of the tank," or, "He looked a little funny and wasn't eating, but I didn't pay much attention." Aquarium fish are very similar to any other house pets, including cats and dogs. They need attention, and the only way attention starts is by observation. The hobbyist needs to look in on his fish at least twice a day.

But sometimes, despite all the observation one can reasonably expect, a fish will become sick, wasted away, or diseased, or fall into such a dilapidated state that it cannot reasonably be saved. What to do?

There are several ways to put down a fish. Many professionals—out of the sight of the pet owner—either strike a hard quick blow to the head or decapitate the fish. These methods are not as uncivilized as they may sound. In decapitation, the nerves are immediately cut off from the rest of the body, and the fish will feel nothing except a short spurt of sensation. These methods are fast and effective; however, they are also violent, and the fish owner may not want to take it upon himself to carry them out. If this is the case, anesthetics can be used for euthanasia purposes. An overdose of ethyl-4-amino benzoate (benzocaine) or ethyl-m-amino benzoate methanesulfonate (trikaine methanesulfonate) will kill a fish specimen humanely.

I recently had a problem with a two-month-old Discus that was wasting away. I tried several treatments, water improvement, and individual care and dips to no avail. It was apparent that within a few days the fish would die. Rather than let it suffer any more misery, I placed it in a smaller container filled with tank water and put the container in the freezer. Within an hour, it was all over.


H. PIPPIN.



Horace Pippin was a self-taught painter. Unhampered by theories of technique, he painted with an intensity that resulted in an original and authentic expression of the American spirit. "I Tell My Heart: The Art of Horace Pippin" includes a broad representation of the 137 known paintings and burnt wood panels of Pippin. It's the most comprehensive exhibition of his work to date. His intuitive genius for composition, color, and form make him one of our most interesting and original American painters, in many respects a modernist ahead of his time. Here's a unique opportunity to see the world through his eyes.

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HOW CURIOSITY (ALMOST) KILLED THE CAT DOCTOR

In a letter to the editor by Dr. Robert A. Lopez, in the September 1, 1995, issue of the Journal of the [illegible]. *In the letter, Lopez, a veterinarian in Westport, New York, described the results of a number of experiments he had conducted to determine whether* Otodectes cynotis, *an ear mite usually found in cats and dogs,* [illegible].

As [illegible] human beings, I decided to become a human guinea pig. I obtained ear mites from a cat and [illegible] that they were *Otodectes cynotis*. Then I moistened a sterile cotton-tipped swab with warm tap water and transferred approximately one gram of ear mites from the cat's ear to my left ear. Immediately, I heard scratching sounds, then moving sounds, as the mites began to explore my ear canal. Itching sensations then started, and all three sensations merged into a weird cacophony of sound and pain that intensified from that moment on. At first, I thought this wouldn't and couldn't last very long. However, as the day and evening wore on, I began to worry. The itching, or pruritus, was increasing. The sounds in my ear were becoming louder as the mites traveled toward my eardrum. I felt helpless. Is this the way a mite-infested animal feels?

For the next five hours, the mites were very active, and then their activity leveled off. There was still something definitely crawling about deep in my left ear, but the discomfort was bearable.

When I went to bed at about 11:00 P.M., the mite activity increased incrementally so that by midnight the mites were very busy, biting, scratching, and moving about. By 1:00 A.M., the sounds were loud. An hour later, the pruritus was very intense. After two hours, the highest level of itching and scratching was attained. Sleep was impossible. Then, suddenly, the mites seemed to lessen their feeding activities, and I could sleep. Mite activity resumed at 7:00 A.M., with light noises and slight pruritus. This pattern was repeated: light mite activity during the day, with a slight increase from approximately 6:00 to 9:00 P.M., and then heavy mite activity from midnight to 3:00 A.M. This pattern of nighttime feeding made sleep, no matter how urgent, completely out of the question.

By the second week, the intensity of the mite activity began to lessen. By the third week, the ear canal was filling up with debris, and I couldn't hear out of my left ear. By the fourth week, mite activity was reduced by 75 percent, and I could feel mites crawling across my face at night. They never tried to enter my right ear, nor did they bite or cause itching anywhere else on my body. At the end of one month, I could no longer feel or hear any mite activity. However, my ear was completely filled with debris. For the first time, I cleansed my ear with swabs and warm-water flushings. Within one week, my left ear was [illegible] by the eighth week. Hearing was normal.

By the eighth week, I decided to try again, to [illegible] that my first experiment had been flawed or misleading. Accordingly, I obtained ear mites from another cat. I transferred a sample to my left ear, as I had done before. Once again, my ear began to react to the mite invasion. Loud scratching noises, pruritus, and pain all began within a few seconds. The same pattern evolved, with an early-evening feeding pattern and a heavy late-night eating session. The first week was again filled with intense

ATONING FOR THE ABUSIVE PARENT

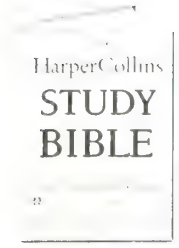
From "A Yizkor Prayer for Victims of Abuse," by Ira F. Stone, in the second issue of Kerem: A journal of creative explorations in Judaism, *published by* [illegible].

"May he she be granted an opportunity [illegible] parent for a child [illegible]

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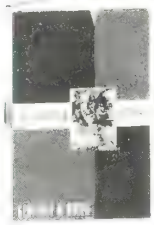
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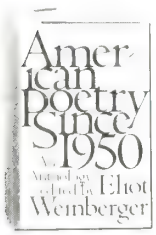
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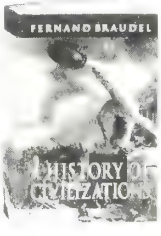
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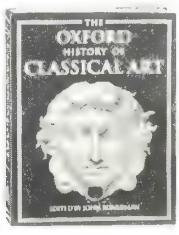
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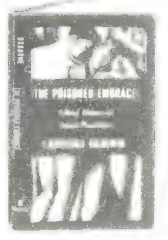
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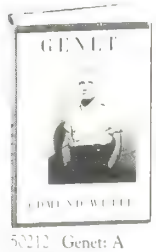


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healed again quickly, except for occasional slight bouts with pruritus.

As a result of my experiment, I now advise [illegible] for mites is late in the evenings, when feeding ac- [illegible]

e I that a third and final trial

[illegible] seven, I repeated the experiment as [illegible] my left ear. Again, the intensity was [illegible] and hearing was only partially affected. By [illegible] ceased biting, although I felt some walking across my face during the night. Once again, nothing [illegible]

JERRY GARCIA, FAITH HEALER

[illegible] issue of Relix: Music for the Mind, *a bi-*

I [illegible] stuff related to the

[Interview]

E.T. IN A JUMPSUIT

From an interview with Hal Wilcox, a UFO "contactee," in the Winter 1993 issue of Far-out! The Unexplainable, the Unusual, and the Unreal, *a quarterly about extraterrestrial life. Wilcox is a retired schoolteacher who lives in Hollywood, California; the interview was conducted by Jim Schmaltz.*

FAR-OUT!: When did you become a contactee?

HAL WILCOX: I was contacted by a gentleman who came to my home, knocked on the door, and introduced himself very properly. I didn't believe one word he said, of course. But he introduced himself as a representative of the interplanetary culture exchange.

[illegible] Where was he?

WILCOX: Zemkla, from the planet Selo, in the Bernard Star. That's 5.9 light-years away.

FAR-OUT!: He was an extraterrestrial?

WILCOX: As far as I was concerned, he was a guy on my front porch, knocking on my door wearing a one-piece jumpsuit.

FAR-OUT!: And this guy looked human? Just some guy in a jumpsuit?

WILCOX: Yeah. Just some guy in a jumpsuit, like Burt Lancaster in that trapeze movie. We're talking about 1963, and even at that point, I thought, "My God, you'd never get me to dress like that and walk around Hollywood."

FAR-OUT!: Did he ask you to?

WILCOX: No. I figured he wants to know where Allen's restaurant is, or wants to use the phone. But instead he comes in the house, turns around, puts his hands on his hips, and announces, "I be Zemkla." I've never heard this name before, so I'm thinking, What the hell is this guy doing in my house? And so then he starts telling me, "I'm reporting from space." This goes on for about a half hour until finally he suggests that we go outside. I figured this is when my buddies are going to jump out and yell, "Surprise!" I'm not believing any of it. But this Zemkla fellow walks out onto the front lawn, and instead of my buddies coming out from behind the bushes, a UFO low-

FAR-OUT!: A UFO?

WILCOX: Yeah. This fellow made wave movements with his hands, and a bell-shaped craft

lowered down over my house. I was one surprised guy. I mean, I was totally shocked. I was stunned that anybody had the gall to come in my house and announce he was Zemkla, but then to go outside and see a UFO, and a Charlton Heston "Moses" routine, clearing the sky, parting the clouds, I was just damn stunned.

FAR-OUT!: But you weren't being abducted?

WILCOX: No, I was an invited person, a contactee, not someone who was grabbed out of his bed screaming and dragged down the hall. That's one of the major reasons why I'm talking publicly. I believe it's important for American citizens to realize that there are some helpful, friendly human beings out in space.

FAR-OUT!: Why were you chosen?

WILCOX: That was the first question that I had. *Why me? I'm just an ordinary person.* I couldn't understand it then, but I can now, because I've stuck it out for thirty years, and each day of my life for the last thirty years has been more exciting than the one before. Now I'm getting involved with time flights.

FAR-OUT!: How many trips have you taken?

WILCOX: There were six flights, two of them to the planet Selo. One flight in 1968 was the result of lots of phone calls and conversations in coffee shops with Zemkla and some of his crew members.

FAR-OUT!: You used to go to coffee shops with Zemkla?

WILCOX: It was mostly Allen's restaurant. They looked like ordinary people. Nobody bothered asking who I was talking to.

FAR-OUT!: How long was that 1968 trip?

WILCOX: Four and a half days. I had an entire agenda of what I wanted to do. See, four years earlier, the computer on the spacecraft had computed who my proper female mate would be on the planet Selo.

FAR-OUT!: Did you mate on that 1968 trip?

WILCOX: Well, I don't know. We got in bed, if that's what you're asking.

FAR-OUT!: So you had what we would call "sex"?

WILCOX: I had sex with her.

FAR-OUT!: What did she look like?

WILCOX: The most gorgeous thing you could ever imagine, structurewise. I don't mean just body structure, but mind, body, soul, the whole thing. She was the best person suited for me on the planet. It was a relationship that I don't think I'll ever be able to replicate. It was probably one of the big problems in my second marriage—on this planet—because it was always in the back of my second wife's mind. But as far as I was concerned, I was totally committed to my wife on this planet, when I was here.

FAR-OUT!: Do you still see this female alien?

WILCOX: No, because of the time-line thing, which is kind of hard to explain.

[Brochure]

TV THAT'S REALLY IN YOUR FACE

From a promotional brochure for Virtual Vision Sport, a "personal projection [illegible] that the user wears like a pair of eyeglasses. A [illegible] television tuner worn on a hip belt, transmits television signals to a reflective lens on the bottom of the glasses, the lens then projects the image so that it appears to be "floating in space" six to fifteen feet away from the viewer. Virtual Vision Sport, which costs $695, is sold by Virtual Vision, a Redmond, Washington, company.

A long time ago television was invented, and it was good as far as it went, which is to say, nowhere. Then along came portable TV, and it was good, too, except somehow the Super Bowl just wasn't the same on a two-inch screen. Then, inevitably, the pendulum swung, and TV was suddenly huge. Giant screen! Sixty inches across! And that was good, too, providing you had a nice stadium-sized rec room and no plans to ever leave it.



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...A COLD, A REAL THAW

"W

and a small child, a small corridor. Tanya makes a narrow corridor because she is slender, but for her age it is a high one—which is understandable, since she's the tallest in her class. Walking out in the morning, Tanya can tell from these corridors whether her girlfriends have already gone to

When there is a wide, low corridor with a dis-

walked by. Sometimes she sees a corridor that is very crooked and then abruptly stops. It means—Tanya lowers her voice—that some drunk was walking, tripped, and fell. In a great cold, drunks frequently freeze to death. In those cases, such a corridor looks like a dead-end

In Zabaikalsk, the cold is salvation. The cold maintains the surroundings, the environment, the [illegible] in a rigorous discipline, in an ironclad order, a stirring and stable balance. Embedded in the frozen earth, which is as hard as concrete, the houses stand straight and sure; one can walk and [illegible] sinking into [illegible] slimy, quagmire shoes don't stay behind in the

Released from the grip of the cold, the houses become limp and slide deep into the earth. For many years, they have been standing considerably [illegible] street level because [illegible] frozen soil. With each year, they sink more and [illegible] sits [illegible]

[illegible] dilapidated little houses twist, grow misshapen, sprawl, and squat even closer to the earth. The entire neighborhood contracts and sinks, so that [illegible] great fleet of submarines were gradually sliding in-

Look at where she is pointing and see that the [illegible] making its way in little streams, channels, and [illegible] down into the houses. Nature in Siberia is extreme; everything here is violent and radical. Just as the mud in Yakutsk begins to engulf the houses, it is not merely the slow trickling of a wa-

[illegible] directly into [illegible] niches and doors, filling passageways and yards, as if the streets of the city were overflowing their curbs and pouring themselves into

[Credo]

THE STYLIST'S REVENGE

From "Middle River Stump Jump: A Credo," by Paul West, in the Fall 1993 Conjunctions, *published by Bard College, in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York. West's statement was part of a special section in the journal on writers' credos. West's most recent novel is* Love's Mansion. *His essay "My Body, Myself" appeared in the August 1989 issue of* Harper's Magazine. *West lives in Ithaca, New York.*

I believe we are living and writing in the last epoch of human endeavor in which anyone will attend to style. A big snowplow behind us will bring a horde of plainspoken mediocrities utterly indifferent to the things we prize Proust, Nabokov, Beckett for. The advance guard of this horde has already taken up roost in the publishing houses.

I believe in the artificial, the unique, the man-made; I am not much given to worrying about the planet; a red giant sun will doom it eventually, and, scientists tell me, it is already too late to mount a departure into space. I want to set down what it has been like to be alive, to get across my own private sense of the universe.

The novel, no less than the poem, voices the gut feeling of being alive, getting into the open the mewling and puking and whining we feel, as well as the blue-riband elation, the hubristic exuberance. Hence my view of language, as it might be of pigment, the twelve-tone scale, marble, the lens and silver nitrate: it is what I work in, dabbling in the blood of my ancestors, echoing their throats in my style, their urgencies in mine. And I am especially eager to make things from words that, although part of being articulate, aren't merely expository, explanatory, matter-of-fact. Language is a mystery from which we can make mysteries that were not there before, skulking in the matrix like penicillin, but came into being with us, evincing our uniqueness. To use language thus is a reverent homage to our predecessors, who come to life in every tone we muster.

Most of the stuff that surrounds us is what the British used to call railway reading: you buy the book, read a bit of it en route, and leave it on your seat for the next occupant. If the audience for a serious novel is no more than 15,000, then rejoice; it will soon be smaller. Hardly anybody knows how to read, and the universities are full of dimwits doing other dimwits an uncritical favor. The astounding thing is that, as the century comes to an end in decadence, as centuries do, fiction is still being judged by incongruous standards: it should confront us with "lovable" characters, it's good [illegible] like Humbert or Lolita [illegible] love to be scrutinized with almost philosophical [illegible] thriller [illegible] while the great fiction of the century gathers dust.

Almost nobody has any taste, and those who pretend to inform the public [illegible] middlebrow matrons of NPR to the flapdoodle wiseacres—have no hope of teaching anybody anything. We will soon be surrounded by so much electronic mediocrity we'll go blind.

I believe in defiance, criticism, craft, and, in the end, loyalty to language, our real author, in whose throat we die. Words are the *hapax legomenon*—the only known instance of a thing [illegible] in the human parade. To do them less than justice is to betray the ancestors alive in them, but I know only a small platoon who can tell good from bad and call trash trash. Idiots with charitably bestowed B minuses have already taken over: a stunning, stupefying majority, more than we could ever kill off. I keep a revenge diary, though, for posthumous publication, a kind of *Devil's Novelist Book*, in which I honor master spirits and thwack dolts, hoping to interest successors and survivors. Or I might squeak it in at the very end, so as not to miss the ensuing noise.

[Names]

EVAN DANDO, BEWARE

From "Why Die Evan Dando, Die?" *an editorial in the debut issue of* Die Evan Dando, Die Magazine, *published in Warrington, Pennsylvania. The quarterly consists largely of attacks on Evan Dando, the lead singer for the Lemonheads, a Boston pop group. According to the editorial, the release last October of the band's sixth album,* Come On Feel the Lemonheads, *"marked the first time that an album has been sold exclusively on the merits of a bandmember's cheekbones." The list below contains names that the editors considered before settling on* Die Evan Dando, Die.

Kill Evan Dando Magazine
Disembowel Evan Dando Magazine
I Want to See Evan Dando's Head on a Post Magazine
Evan Dando Gives Horses' Asses a Bad Name Magazine
Evan Dando Can Bite Me Right Here Journal
Here's a 2 by 4 with a Rusty Nail in It, There's Evan Dando's Head . . . Any Ideas? Magazine

Nature, who would have no sort of objection to

will bring the three girls, and that you will allow me to try some [photographic] groupings of Ethel and Janet (I fear there is no use naming Ruth as well, at her age, though *I* should have no objection!) without any drapery or suggestion of it.

I need hardly say that the pictures should be such as you might, if you liked, frame and hang up in your drawing-room. On no account would I do a picture which I should be unwilling to show to all the world — or at least the artistic world.

If I did not believe I could take such pictures without any lower motive than a pure love of Art,

character, I would not ask it.

I print all such pictures *myself*, and of course would not let anyone see them without your per-

Sincerely,
C. L. Dodgson

look without. Also the bathing-drawers would enable me to do a full front view of Ethel, which of course could not be done without them: but why should you object to my doing a *back* view of her without them? It would be a *perfectly* presentable picture, and far more artistic than with them. As to Janet, at *her* age they are surely unnecessary, whatever view were taken.

Now comes my reason for hoping you and Mrs. Mayhew will after all give *carte blanche* as to

I pay Mrs. Mayhew the compliment of believing that she states her *real* reason for objecting to the entire absence of drapery. I was really pleased to read in Mrs. Mayhew's note that her reason for objecting to absolute undress was because she felt "sure that the children themselves would decidedly object." Those words were very welcome reading, because *I* happen to feel sure, and for good reasons, that they would not only not "decidedly" object, but they wouldn't object *at all*. For I had told them (I hope there is no harm in doing so) of the pictures I *wished* to take, but had said that of course Mrs. Mayhew must give leave before I could do them. Both Ruth and Ethel seemed quite sure that *Janet* wouldn't object in the least to being done naked, and Ethel, when I asked her if *she* would object, said in the most simple and natural way, that she wouldn't object at all. I didn't ask Ruth, as I felt no hope of leave being given by the higher powers in her case.

Now don't crush all my hopes, by telling me that all Mrs. Mayhew said was merely *façon de parler*, and that all the time you and Mrs. Mayhew object absolutely to the thing, however much the children themselves would like it! I feel pretty sure that neither she nor you would have admired, as you have done, all those studies of naked children (which of course were done from live children), if you had objected *on general principles* to children being pictured in that condition.

At any rate, I trust you will let me do some pictures of *Janet* naked: at her age, it seems almost absurd to even suggest any scruple about dress.

My great hope, I confess, is about *Ethel*, who is (artistically) worth ten Janets. Do consider *her* case in reference to the fact that she herself is quite indifferent about dress.

If worst comes to worst, and you won't concede any nudities at all, I think you ought to allow *all three* to be done in bathing-drawers, to make up for my disappointment!

Sincerely yours,
C. L. Dodgson

P.S. I hope Mrs. Mayhew won't mind my suggesting that I never photograph well when a large party come. If Ruth and Ethel bring Janet, there is really no need for Mrs. Mayhew to come as well — that is, *if* you can trust me to keep my promise of abiding strictly by the limits laid



"Big Apple Circus," by Lynn Saville. Saville's work appeared in a group show at Other Criteria at 58 Mercer Gallery in New York City last summer.

down. If you *can't* trust my word, then please never bring or send any of the children again! I should certainly prefer, in that case, to drop the acquaintance. I get on pretty well with three people on the premises: better, usually, with two. What I like best of all is to have *two* hours of leisure-time before me, *one* child to photograph, and *no* restrictions as to costume. (It is a descending Arithmetical Series—2, 1, 0.)

May 28, 1879

Dear Mrs. Mayhew,

Thanks for the letter. After my last [letter] had gone, I wished to recall it, and take out the sentence in which I had quite gratuitously suggested the possibility that you *might* be unwilling to trust me to photograph the children by themselves in undress. And now I am more than ever sorry I wrote it, as it has accidentally led to your telling me what I would gladly have remained ignorant of. For I hope you won't think me very fanciful in saying I should have no pleasure in doing any such pictures, now that I know I am only permitted such a privilege on condition of being under chaperonage. I had rather do no more pictures of your children except in full dress; I leave forgive all the trouble I have given you about it.

Sincerely yours,
C. L. Dodgson

[Memoir]

TEAM SPIRIT

From "Basketball Season," a memoir by Donna Tartt, in volume No. 2 of The Oxford American, *published in Oxford, Mississippi. Tartt is the author of* The Secret History, *published in paperback by Ballantine. Her story "A Christmas Pageant" appeared in the December 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

The year I was a freshman cheerleader I was reading *1984*. I was fourteen years old then and failing algebra and the fact that I was failing it worried me as I would worry now if the Mafia were after me, or if I had shot somebody and the police were coming to get me. But I did not have an awful lot of time to brood about this. It was basketball season then, and there was a game nearly every night. In Mississippi the schools are far apart, and sometimes we would have to drive two hundred miles to get to Panola Academy, Sharkey-Issaquena, funny how those old names come back to me; we'd leave sometimes before school was out, not get home till twelve or one in the morning. I was not an energetic teenager, and this was hard on me. Too much exposure to the high-decibel world of teen sports—shrieking buzzers, roaring stomping mob,



Girl in Ram, Chicago, 1991," by Paul D'Amato. The photograph will be part of a one-man exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College, in Chicago, from June 18 through July

kept me in a kind of perpetual stunned condition; the tin-roof echo of rural gymnasiums rang through all my silences, and frequently at night I woke in a panic because I thought a play-

my teeth out.

Buicks, Lincoln Town Cars, riding through the

and my schoolbooks piled beneath my feet. Our fathers — professional men, mostly, lawyers and op-

ferying us back and forth from the games. The other cheerleaders griped about not being al-

ed along with them, I was secretly appalled

when you walked by their table in the

with [illegible] cookies; there were always

[illegible] at the radio, applied Bonne

ork or their hair.

It upset me a little, es-

pecially the end, but the statement ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL, BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE EQUAL [illegible] echoed sentiments that I recognized as prevalent in the upper echelons of the cheerleading squad. Our captain was a mean girl named Cindy Clark. She talked a lot about spirit and pep, and how important it was for us to work as a team, but she and her cronies ostracized the younger girls and were horrible to us off the court. Cindy was approximately my height and was forced to be my partner in some of the cheers, a circumstance that displeased her as much as it did me. I remember a song that was popular around that time; it had lyrics that went:

We are family
I've got all my sisters with me

This had for some reason been incorporated into one of the chants, and Cindy and I were frequently forced to sing it together: arms around each other, leaning on each other like drunks, beaming with joy, and behaving in every way like the sisters that we, in fact, were most certainly not.

Though there was a sharp distinction between the older girls and the younger ones, we were also divided, throughout our ranks and regardless of

age, into two distinct categories: those of snob and slut. The snobs had flat chests, pretty clothes, and were skittish and shrill. Though they were always sugar-sweet to one's face, in reality they were a nasty, backbiting lot, always doing things like stealing one another's boyfriend and trying to rig the elections for the Beauty Revue. The sluts were from poorer families, and much better liked in general. They drank beer, made out with boys in the hallways, and had horrible black hickeys all over their necks. Our squad was divided pretty much half and half. Physically and economically, I fell into the category of snob, but I did poorly in school and was not gung ho or clubbish enough to fit in very well with the rest of them. (To be a proper snob, one had always to be making floats for some damn parade or other, or organizing potluck dinners for the Booster Club.) The sluts, I thought, took a more sensible view of such foolishness; they smoked and drank; I found them, as a rule, much nicer. Being big girls generally, they were the backbones of the stances, the foundations from which the pyramids rose and, occasionally, fell; I, being the smallest on the squad, had to work with them rather closely, in special sessions after the regular cheerleading practices, since they were the ones who lifted me into the air, who spotted me in gymnastics, upon whose shoulders I had to stand to form the obligatory pyramid. They all had pet names for me, and—though vigorously heterosexual—babied me in what I am sure none of them realized was a faintly lecherous way: tickles and pinches, slaps on the rump, pulling me into their laps in crowded cars and crooning stupid songs from the radio into my ear. At the games they completely ignored me, as every fiber of their attention was devoted to flirting with—and contriving to make out with—various boys. As I was both too young to be much interested in boys and lacking in the fullness of bosom and broadness of beam that would have made them much interested in me, I was excluded from this activity. But still the sluts felt sorry for me and gave me tips on how to make myself attractive (pierced ears, longer hair, tissue paper in the bra)—and, when we were loitering around after practices, often regaled me with worldly tales of various sexual, obstetric, and gynecological horrors, some of which still make my eyes pop to think about.

The gymnasiums were high-ceilinged, barnlike, drafty, usually in the middle of some desolate field. We were always freezing in our skimpy plaid skirts, our legs all goose pimples as we clapped and stamped on the yellowed wooden floor. At halftime there were the detested stances, out in the middle of the court, which involved perilous leaps, and complex timing, and—more likely than not—tears and remonstrations in the changing rooms.

[Montage]

SPORTS COMPLEX

By David Shields. [illegible] Open City, [illegible] quarterly literary journal published in New York City. Shields is the author, most recently, of A Handbook for Drowning, *a collection of stories. His monologue "Information Sickness" appeared in the June 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

In high school I was athletic and thus, to a certain extent, popular. However, I worked unduly hard at it, at sports, with very little sprezzatura, which made me extremely unpopular among the dozen or so really popular, athletic people. Why? Because I made popularity or grace look like something less than a pure gift. Only the dozen or so really popular, athletic people knew I was unpopular, so I could, for instance, be elected, if I remember correctly (I don't: I'm making this up), vice president of the junior class and yet be, in a sense, underappreciated. It was a frustrating place to reign, really, consigned to the highest ring of the Ringstrasse, unable to escape or improve. Every Halloween I cowered in my basement bedroom with the doors locked, lights out, shades down, and listened to the sound of lobbed eggs. In the fall of 1973 I broke my leg, badly, playing football on the beach (so Kennedyesque!), and the first day I was home from the hospital I lay immobile in a body cast in the living room, an aluminum pin in my thigh. Two medics carrying a stretcher stormed the front door, looking for someone who had supposedly fallen on the front steps. Later that afternoon, a middle-aged man, slightly retarded, tried to deliver a pepperoni pizza. A dump truck started pouring a ton of gravel into our minuscule backyard. A cop came to investigate a purported robbery. Another ambulance. A florist. An undertaker from central casting. A paint salesman. My popular, athletic friends, who had gathered together to watch the proceedings with binoculars in one of their houses at the top of the hill, orchestrated this traffic all night and deep into the morning. They meant it as a terrorizing, thoroughly evil prank, and my mother certainly saw it that way, but I never took it as anything other than the most moving, collective confession of the pain that consists of the inability to identify with someone else's pain other than by intensifying it. Vehicles from most areas of the service sector were, at one point, parked virtually around the block.

I

ARGUING WITH THE POPE

In an age of doubt, an examination of faith

By Barbara Grizzuti Harrison

"If some small mistake were made in doctrine, huge blunders might be made in human happiness. . . . A slip in the definitions might stop all the dances; might wither all the Christmas trees or break all the Easter eggs. . . . The Church had to be careful, if only that the world might be careless."—G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*

I am Roman Catholic in the way my eyes are brown—it is not a condition from which I want or wish to, escape. But from time to time my love for my Church is sorely tested, as it was when I went to Denver last summer to see the Pope (who had designated the week of August 11 to August 15 as World Youth Day). I had no way of knowing at the time that an encyclical—a pastoral letter to the whole Church, designed to protect the faithful from "fundamental error"—would soon be published. On October 5 the Pope issued the 179-page document called *Veritatis Splendor*, a remarkable and controversial document for which, it is clear to me now, the Denver convention was a kind of spiritual and tactical preparation.



In the event, the encyclical would ask and implacably answer questions I had brought with me to Denver (*Is it ever permitted to commit an act of lesser evil to prevent a larger evil?*), questions that had been [illegible] of bemused speculation, and also of anguish to me: questions about the place of the fractious Catholic Church in the technologized world; questions about my own place in the Church in which I, in jubilant belief and in sorrowful disbelief, profess to believe; questions about human sexuality; and questions, reflecting my own moral dilemmas, about the role of conscience in the affairs of the body.

The Church has always been at war with the world, which it simultaneously loves; it is in this coincidence of opposites that the spiritual wealth

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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, WHEN I FIRST CAME TO IT AFTER YEARS IN THE DESERT OF DISBELIEF, WAS AN ABSOLUTE HAVEN FOR ME; I DIDN'T QUARREL WITH IT PRECISELY BECAUSE I WAS ALLOWED TO QUARREL WITH IT

needed to see, in the flesh—the demanding old Pope, a man wedded to the past, a man who calls the earth a "vast planet of tombs," and the buoyant young people in whom the future lives so vividly. Stasis and energy, the old and the young: perhaps another coincidence of opposites, two halves of the equation meeting and (like the lion and the lamb) providentially joining. One is sometimes immensely grateful to the Church for espousing eternal values and sometimes inclined to regard it as fossilized. One's equilibrium, such as it is, rests shakily on the apparent dichotomy of spirit and flesh . . . the instructive

I always feel that the real test of one's affections lies in the flesh, and in dreams (an alchemical combination): love is not disembodied. Dulled, abraded, snarled, and put-upon, true love is regenerated the moment one rests eyes upon the beloved; isn't it so? And answers that evade us in the light of day come to us in dreams that open or close the valves of our hearts.

One's heart is troubled: If only the Roman Catholic Church were not—with its witnesses and martyrs to social justice, and its prophets, its cranky and adorable saints, gorgeous and noble, sly and grand, its heroic go-to-church-every-Sunday foot soldiers—so wonderful. If only it were not so terrible, so stern (and simultaneously inane) in its increasingly rabid insistence on absolute obedience to truth as truth is defined by the Holy Father, and so terrible in its apparent determination to treat the human body as if it were a curse, particularly in view of the fact that we are instructed to believe in the sanctity of matter, a teaching —thrilling, sane, and consummately logical—that derives from the Incarnation, the enfleshment of God, a miracle that took place in the body

My love for the Church has been informed in no small part by the perception that it was a perversion of its articulated truths to regard the body as merely an envelope for the entrapped, laboring soul and also, in great part, by the supremacy the Church has traditionally accorded the role affairs of the body. . . . I

Most Catholics I know well have a dense and r the official, institutional

dissent (to say nothing of doubt) like a constant low-grade fever. When I was received into the Catholic Church, fifteen or so years ago (odd that I shouldn't remember the date of my First Communion), I used to feel vexation toward Catholics for whom the primary fact about the Church was that it was "repressive." For "cultural Catholics" I had, I am not pleased to admit, disdain: one believed that the Church was the channel for truth and grace, or one didn't. I have since come to what may be a more sophisticated and is certainly a more liberal view: the Church is three-tiered. There is the official Church, the loyal (troubled and sad and hopeful rather than bitterly angry) opposition, and radical reformers who wish to drastically reshape the institution's hierarchy.

I was baptized Roman Catholic. I became a Jehovah's Witness when I was nine and remained one until I was twenty-two. (You cannot imagine the bliss of compressing the loneliness and horror of those years into one sentence.) I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah's Witnesses by immersion in water at a 1944 convention of Witnesses in Buffalo. (There was a plague of caterpillars that year; they dropped, fat and death-green and juicy, from the trees and writhed in the light of street lamps; they fell, with soft little thumps and oily leavings, on one's hair.)

For years I was told what friends I might have: no "worldly" ones—that is to say, no one who wasn't a Jehovah's Witness in good standing. I was told what music I might listen to: Beethoven "worldly" and syphilitic, might very well, I was given to understand, be the deceptive and seductive voice of the devil, who stalked about masked as an angel of light; I was twenty-three before I heard Bach's *Mass in B Minor* for the first time. I was told what books I might read: I read Salinger locked in an attic closet, crying for the joy of him. I worked as a housekeeper at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was told I was "too smart." I was told to remove my affections from the "worldly" object my love had, without the consent of my will, sought out and sanctified (a schoolteacher, Arnold Horowitz); I was instructed to rejoice in his destruction and the destruction of all the wicked at a bloody and imminent Armageddon. (*"If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off."*) I was nine when I started preaching from door to door, miserable and arrogant, sin



gular, a freak. I left Jehovah's Witnesses more than a decade later, when I understood that I could not love and worship a God who was less compassionate than I. It came down to two simple propositions: I could not believe in the intrinsic wickedness of the world and the flesh; and God could not kill Arnold.

The official Roman Catholic Church, when I first came to it after years in the desert of disbelief, was an absolute haven for me; I didn't quarrel with it, precisely because I was told I *might* quarrel with it. The Church offered me the freedom of the cloister: safety within defined parameters. I felt the space to be ample, the horizons limitless. I loved the rambunctiousness of Catholics, their freedom to choose and to tease, to question and to provoke; I loved the diversity within the unity. I loved the sacramental life of the Church, the liturgy, the community. By comparison with my apocalyptic religion, the Roman Catholic Church was fireworks and a party, and I came to feel at home in the wild and startling world I had been brought up to despise.

I brought this baggage—a lot of baggage—to World Youth Day. I brought loathing for religious isolationism and the conviction that my adolescent suffering lived on somewhere in my spirit and marrow, a toxin that had insinuated itself into my faith; I wanted to close the circle of time and bring the past and the present into alignment and into an apprehension of my faith.

What follows is a report from the front; and it is a report from the interior.

Jet-lagged and wilted, I am sitting in [illegible] Street Mall. No one is shopping; merchants are cranky; mounted police—who outnumber pedestrians [illegible] sober, obsequious, and silly (rather, in their demotic scorn, like camels). In a penumbra of shade I fiddle with food at a pizza boutique; nearby a man stands with a cutout cardboard effigy of the Pope for anyone who wishes to be photographed with a likeness of the Holy Father; there are no takers.

Joslins department store has announced 30 percent off silver and gold crosses ($14.99–$350). Evangelist Richard Roberts has announced a Miracle Healing Service to be held on Friday the thirteenth at Happy Church on Orchard Road. The Reverend Maurice Gordon, pastor of the Lovingway United Pentecostal Church, has placed an illuminated sign on the facade of his building: [illegible] Pope the Antichrist? "He's on the shortlist, along with the Dalai Lama," Rev. Gordon replies.

Breathing hard—Denver is 5,280 feet high,

I SEE, IN THE SPRAWLED BODIES OF TRAVEL-WEARY KIDS AND IN THE INSISTENT, STUTTERING WHINE OF BIG-BELLIED COPTERS, AN IMAGE OF THE DESTRUCTION—THE "CIVILIZATION OF DEATH"—THE HOLY FATHER WOULD COME TO DENVER TO DECRY

days to get fully acclimated to the height and the mation loose-leaf notebook from the press-registration desk of the 739-room Radisson Hotel, where I am staying, as are 550 other members of the press (altogether, 3,500 journalists registered). This simple chore is not entirely without maddying incident:

"You can't have your notebook yet. There's a misprint about St. Clare of Assisi."

"Yes, but I have to know where to go. . . . What's St. Clare got to do with it?"

Silence.

"Perhaps you could black out the stuff about St. Clare? Or rip out the page?" St. Clare is the patron saint of washerwomen and of television.

"Yes, but I really must go where the kids are. I

He relents. (The air is thin up here.) "All right," he says, "I can see you have a good heart." He can? How can he? I grind my teeth at his presumption. "Having a bad hair day?" a reporter from a regional Catholic paper asks, and I glare at her, dampening her beaming smile, poor thing; I feel myself to have been sufficiently commented upon. The red notebook, of Talmudic length and obscure detail (what are "pre-animation" programs?), serves me ill; by the end of Youth Day, the Grand Ballroom of the Radisson will be littered with unused notebooks, information having been gleaned chaotically from word of mouth and from local newspapers.

by Father Ken Roberts, who, according to the accompanying promotional leaflet, "left the jet-setting life of an English playboy to become a

I am handed a copy of the Benedictine Rule:

McNichols indoor stadium, where the kids are registering, shimmers in the hellish sun. Helicopters swarm overhead, their propellers slicing heat so tangible one feels one could carry it in a bucket. They cross the unblemished sky, making landings and mock landings at adjoining Mile High Stadium: ugly apocalyptic insects, drowning thought. They are practicing for the arrival of the Pope on August 12 and the arrival of President Clinton, who is to greet him. With a sickening act of the imagination, I freeze the moment and see, in the sprawled bodies of travel-weary kids claiming their patches of shade and in the insistent stuttering whine of the big-bellied copters, a foretaste of war, an image of the destruction—the "civilization of death"—the Holy Father would come to Denver to decry. . . . The earth, the Pontiff once said, is "ever more a burial ground."

Exhaustion and adrenaline. Under tents people browse lazily among a hundred kinds of Church-sanctioned souvenirs: white foam miters; Miracle Mugs, which, empty, portray night in Denver under a black sky unenlivened by a yellow sickle moon—when the cups are filled with hot liquid, the scene changes stereoptically, and as the sun comes up so does a grinning Pontiff. They wear T-shirts on which are emblazoned HE WHO DIES WITH THE MOST TOYS—STILL DIES; GET A LIFE; HIS PAIN IS YOUR GAIN; IDAHO 'TATERS.

Inside McNichols participants queue for credentials and for housing assignments in dorms, parish houses, host-family homes, garages, and in a five-acre tent city in the southeast corner of Fitzsimons Army Medical Center (where there are no showers, no electricity, and no plumbing).

The youthful participants, 186,000 of them, have come from all over the world—Australia, Hong Kong, Sudan, Poland, Mexico, India, Pakistan, France, Italy, Turkey, Bosnia, Serbia, Haiti, Cambodia, Ukraine—for recommitment to the Church, an exercise in communal sanctity and activism and personal meditation and prayer. Seventy percent are from the United States. Cuba has two delegates; Nicaragua has 474. Some were self-selected. Some were chosen by their parishes and dioceses, others by Catholic organizations national and international—Teens Encounter Christ, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Catholic Boy Scouts, the Salesian Youth Movement—liberal (the Maryknolls) and conservative (Opus Dei); they flew, they walked, they came by bus and car, often at great personal expense and discomfort. They participated in walkathons and tastathons and lotteries to get here.

They've come, one kid says, "to continue to

grow each day in holiness." The kid who says this is wearing a backpack and a money belt, jeans and a WHITE SOX baseball cap; he is carrying a guitar, and on his T-shirt are the words CHRIST'S COUNTERCULTURE. "And to cruise girls?" I ask, emboldened by the sight of three lissome long-haired beauties signing their names, in Magic Marker, on the muscled chest of a blond Californian giant.

"Yeah," he says shyly. "Yeah. Why not?"

Why not, indeed? One believes, if one is Catholic—one is obliged to believe—in the sanctity of the flesh, the holiness of matter, the sacramental nature of the quotidian: we believe because God became Man.

In the close air of the stadium, Mexican girls, hot, are singing "California, Here We Come." (Why?) Puerto Ricans are chanting "Puerto Rico! Puerto Rico! Puerto Rico!" popping their fingers, snapping gum. Nuns are trying, with total lack of stereotypical severity, to impose order while at the same time encouraging and sustaining good cheer: a middle-aged nun joins a conga line; her feet are unversed but her body is willing, and her veil flies and her crucifix swings in a wide arc on her ample breast. Guys with cowboy shirts and girls with cowboy boots gravely execute a country line dance.

Thirty-seven years ago I attended religious conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses. How well I remember the delectable boy-girl tension of those assemblies: sitting behind third base at Yankee Stadium looking across to the first-base stands, where I knew Dennis Gates sat, wondering if he was scanning the stands for me; crossing my legs just so, in case he was, primping my hair. We wore white gloves in those days and a cologne called Friendships Gardens; we danced the tango. Bob Schroeder took me for a walk in Central Park, and we looked deep into each other's eyes and talked about God, our eyes like fires in a dry thicket. At some point during the exceedingly invigorating God talk, I noticed Bob Schroeder was holding my hand. He blushed brick red. "It's just a hand," I said. "I'm just holding it," he said.

The question now reverberating in my head is relentless: Is there something aberrant about a young person's choosing, in 1993, to come to a religious convention? Chelsea would look at home here, and Amy Carter too, and so, for that matter, would George Stephanopoulos. These kids are no gookier, nerdier, weirder than kids one might find at any summer camp or on any college campus . . . and far less fanatical and obsessive than the kids at Woodstock, with which World Youth Day is constantly and tediously compared.

But: no premarital sex, no birth control, priestly celibacy—can they accept all this? If I am inclined to feel that the official post–Vatican II Church is profoundly anti-body (and I'm fifty-nine, for heaven's sake), what must these kids, hormones executing double somersaults in their veins, think?

A twenty-year-old from Oklahoma, still clothed in baby fat, earnestly informs me that sex is not a coarse act, not a matter of slippery heaving bodies and cracking bones. (He's a virgin; he should know.) A convert, he tells me the great thing about the Catholic Church is that it "puts its cards on the table . . . and then you dialogue . . . yin and yang," he says, losing me.

A young Guatemalan man who lives in South-Central L.A. and works in a gang mission tells me that "rhythm is a good birth-control method, if the man is disciplined enough." "And if he isn't?"



The girls sitting around him on the brown grass outside McNichols giggle and throw their hands in the air.

Pretty Mary Margaret, pale—perhaps from an excess of piety, perhaps from exhaustion—is jumpy, both drained and anticipatory; she has just arrived on a three-day bus ride from Vancouver, and she wants nothing so much as a shower. She is assigned to the Fitzsimons center . . . where a cupful of water will have to suffice. "I'm going to Mexico next year," she says, "so this is a kind of warm-up to all *that* suffering." It is in my mind to tell her that she needn't court suffering or flirt with it; it will come to her, in the fullness of time, unbidden and quite soon enough. I censor my unkind words, but not my thoughts: Mary Margaret, I think, will grow up to be the kind of Catholic I cannot abide. She will forever be offering her sufferings up to God (not a bad idea in itself—suffering, like guilt, having to be put to some use, given the remorselessness of its occurrence); and she will make a general pest and martyr of herself, a reproach to joy. She will create suffering in order to offer it up to God (to whom no gift is unacceptable), when all she has to do (alas) is wait for it to visit her.

Photograph by Christopher Wahl for *Vogue*

Sylvain, from France, who tells me that he is "here to be in the light," says that "the set teachings of the Church are the ideal—something we strive for but often don't reach. The Church is like a great family, a refuge; it takes you in when you fail, when no one else will—it has to."

In the afternoon, the International Youth Forum—an elite corps of young people, 270 delegates from 101 countries presented by organizers as "the real working group" of the assembly, the "cream of the crop," the "leaven of the loaf"—holds the first of two Vatican-managed press conferences in the science building of Regis University. In official press releases, there is familiar homiletic rhetoric about work and family and thematic decrial of the "anti-life culture" of abortion, euthanasia, AIDS, suicide . . . and, rather nicely, I think, the recognition that illiteracy is as much a threat to life as drugs and alcohol, "because living is to have the capacity of understanding . . . to know the truth and seek it, to prepare . . . for work that is dignified and for an active participation [illegible] the community." ("*In the beginning*



[illegible] las with three [illegible]. "This Forum [illegible]

There is something about the word "transparency" that pierces my heart. In the Middle Ages, it was believed that sin made humans opaque; if one were without sin, one would be transparent, full of light. ("Like those anatomical models at Toys R Us," my boyfriend, a rascal, says.) Transparency (or candor, which, later, Denver Archbishop J. Francis Stafford was to urge upon youth): a radical openness to experience, a willingness to risk and to risk being seen—to risk being known in all one's dimensions—a welcomed and embraced vulnerability, the qualities of which Mary (to whose Immaculate Heart in 1984 the Holy Father entrusted the Soviet Union) is in Scripture the best and most revered example.

There is also, on the dais, an American resident of Rome, Joan Lewis, representing the Vatican Information Service. I ran into Ms. Lewis in the early Eighties, in Santa Susanna, the American church in Rome, which I regarded as a kind of curiosity: it seemed odd to me that anyone should want to chitchat with American government servants in heavenly Rome when one could be in the animating and intriguing company of Italian Catholics, who, for better or for worse, treat their churches like extensions of their living rooms. I have a clear picture of Ms. Lewis in the *cortile* of Santa Susanna, her loud voice—a voice straight from a Henry James novel, Henrietta Stackpole without largess of heart—pitilessly mocking the length of little Italian girls' skirts. (Girls' dresses fall to their ankles until the girls grow breasts, and then the skirts climb to their thighs; there is no logic in this—Roman logic defies comprehension but sometimes rewards intuition.) Now it falls to Ms. Lewis to introduce the panelists and to explain their mandate, which is to prepare and deliver to the Pope a "letter of purpose," the fruit of collegial workshop discussions, meditation, and prayer.

I ask His Eminence if I may sit in—quietly and unobtrusively—on some of the forum's workshops. [illegible] I [illegible] days of abstractions and propaganda, and I long for substance and exhilaration and healing. After all, this is a media event, and, after all, these young men and women are here, they say, to evangelize. So why don't they start with us, with the press, heathens one and all? But the rule is strict: members of the press are not to be admitted. "Do you think the youth would

NO SINGLE IMAGE OF THE POPE STAINS MY IMAGINATION; HE IS VIRILE, AUSTERE (PIGEON-TOED, HUNCHED), OLD, DETACHED, HAMMY, DOOMSDAY-SAD, AND TOTALLY LACKING IN THE CHARISMA HE IS SAID IN ABUNDANCE TO HAVE

be comfortable with you in the room?" the cardinal says. I can't think why not. The cardinal's definition of youth is elastic: the youngest participant in the forum is fifteen-year-old Ijang Marysyilanus from Indonesia; the oldest is thirty-nine.

Cardinal Pironio's message to the forum is: "To live is to be happy and to pass on the happiness of having discovered Life to others." It occurs to me that it has been a long time since happiness has been a goal one hears spoken of with any ease; one hears about self-esteem and well-being, about sobriety and recovery and physical and mental fitness and okayness and wellness . . . and even about unhappiness—but happiness seems to have been shrunk and made to retreat into a closet, as if it were too wet, too unruly, too immodest, too enormous to be trotted out naked for the public gaze.

The panelists deplore dissent ("Certain things are settled and should be accepted"). "My people are just surviving," says Yvette, a young woman from Cameroon. "Do you think they care about women priests?" Women's ordination and clerical celibacy and abortion are problems "only for people outside the Church and for Americans. . . . There's no news in these issues." Yvette says it is impossible to entertain any notion of community that is not predicated upon absolute obedience to the Church.

I want, for any number of reasons, to cry.

"*Love God and do as you please. . . . Have God in your heart—at your court—in your ivory bed—under your rich robes—in the army—at banquets.*" Blessed Ermengard, Duchess of Bretagne. How beautiful.

But *Love God and do as you please*, exquisite in its simplicity, could, by a sin-disordered mind and callous conscience, be read as: Do whatever the hell you feel like doing. Human nature is so "affected by sin," the voice of our conscience could be that of Cyndi Lauper masquerading as Renata Tebaldi. How do I know that I am not so riven and polluted by sin that I wouldn't know Truth if it bit my cheek?

I find myself in the familiar position of longing for the religious certainty that I simultaneously abjure; whereas for the members of the International Youth Forum, seventy-three-year-old Karol Wojtyla is Absolute and brother, Father and friend.

Twilight, and an end to enervating heat; I am made tranquil by the mountain-cool air. The kids, at dusk, are exuberant. Seeking one another's faces, hands, smiles, needing to hear their questions echoed and their answers echoed, needing to play and to pray in unison, they are gathered here in Civic Center Park (renamed, for the occasion, Celebration Plaza), a short walk from the Radisson and from the gilt-domed capitol. I find myself humming a song from an old movie called *State Fair*. There are booths offering literature—calls to vocation and to missionary work, information about Catholic colleges and universities. The grass, bordered with begonias and petunias, smells sweet. There are bratwurst vendors and Häagen-Dazs and Coke carts.

Two Italian priests, skirts hiked up, feet dangling in the reflecting pool, are smoking. One of them, in easy response to my curious glance, shrugs. "Ah," he says. "We smoke in Italy. Why? Because we know in our bones that we are mortal, and we believe in our hearts that we are immortal. You jog."

Later that night, in my room at the Radisson, superimposed on pay-TV (*Basic Instinct*) is an image I can't get out of my mind: a Mexi- [illegible] any reasonable North American standards—kneeling bareheaded in the brutal coruscant sun, her hands folded in prayer, whispering (moaning) the rosary. Her chipped red fingernail polish.

(What will happen to her later? After prayers, under her sleeping bag in the garage-dorm she shares with boys and girls endowed, like her, with sanctity and sex, will she cuddle, will she flirt, will she snuggle with her fantasies of a lovely boy? Will she clutch her rosary to her breast? I look up "slut" on my Compaq computer's thesaurus; the only antonym it gives for "slut" is "virgin." *Pace papa.*)

No single image of the Pope stains my imagination; in the pictures I resurrect from memory he is virile, austere (pigeon-toed, hunched), old, detached, hammy, doomsday-sad, and totally lacking in the charisma he is said in abundance to have—in particular by television newspeople who disagree with all that he holds sacred, but

won't let that stand in the way of their being

He has sent, in advance of his flying to them, a "Message to the Youth of the World" (prefaced by the theme of the gathering, from the Gospel according to John: "I came that they might have life, and have it to the full"):

"True and lasting unity . . . can only be achieved by building on the foundations of a common heritage of values accepted and shared by all, . . . respect for the dignity of the human person, a willingness to welcome life, the defence of human rights, and openness to transcendence and the realm of the spirit. . . ."

He inveighs against superficiality or despair and "the teachers of the 'fleeting moment,' who invite people to give free rein to every instinctive urge or longing, with the result that individuals fall



prey to a sense of anguish and anxiety leading them to seek refuge in false artificial paradises."

Once he was a poet; and sometimes he gives one reason to remember this: just before he comes to Denver from Mexico, "the poor South," he says, "will judge the rich North." He strikes me as northern in his (cool and tidy) temperament, not messily Mediterranean or Latin. So, nice, therefore, to hear him speak a prose poem about the untidy, unruly South, simultaneously meek and flamboyant, bowed-down and noisy, the South that creates muddles and knows (because it has had so much practice) how to live with tragedies. It is my peculiar bigotry to believe that Roman Catholics are southern; Episcopalians are

The Pope calls the young people ambassadors, evangelizers . . . and these words cause in me a little flurry of anxiety: I do not like to be reminded that I was once a child evangelist; it frightens me.

The buzz in the Grand Ballroom, working space for reporters, who may watch Youth Day events on a mammoth TV screen, is that a papal encyclical is in the works—rumored to be (though, as it happened, not) infallible. For an encyclical to be infallible—immune from error—the Pope must speak ex cathedra (the last infallible statement was made in the late 1950s). The anticipation of an infallible encyclical designed to protect the faithful from fundamental errors in faith and morals is fraught with jittery excitement and alarm, particularly when the subject is human sexuality—which, according to the buzz, it is.

In one of the official press releases, we are told to expect the Pope to address himself in Denver to what he calls "destructive criticism" of the Church. How will he define "destructive"?

Buzz: There will, according to the encyclical, be a new litmus test for the appointment of bishops: they must verbally condemn birth control.

In the Sixties, following the bracing openness of Vatican II, moral theologians were inclined to speak of sex not in absolute but in relative terms (in Vatican-speech, they were informed by "proportionalism and consequentialism"). In 1977, the Catholic Theological Society of America published a book called *Human Sexuality* (which I received when I was taking religious instructions from a priest at St. Patrick's Cathedral, prior to being received into the Church; I would be surprised if the book—or he—were still there). "Premarital sexual morality is largely a matter of drawing honest and appropriate lines . . . ," it said. "Is it self-liberating, other-enriching, honest, faithful, life-serving, and joyous? To what extent, if any, is there selfishness, dishonesty, disrespect, promiscuity, the danger of scandal or of hurting or shaming family and loved ones? Young people . . . should be challenged to question themselves as to whether they are not simply using each other to prove their respective masculinity, femininity, sexual attrac-

IT IS NATURAL FOR A WOMAN TO SEE HER BODY AS HER *SELF*. THINK OF THE PARADIGMS: EVE'S *BODY* WAS THE ARENA OF TEMPTATION AND SIN; MARY'S BODY WAS THE ARENA OF REDEMPTION, THE SOURCE OF HER SAINTLINESS

tiveness or prowess. To this should be added for young and old alike the question of willingness to accept a child if one is conceived. No contraceptive device thus far invented is altogether foolproof. Dishonesty is certainly involved when a man engages in sexual intercourse with a woman with whom he would not want to have a child. . . ."

Although not exactly an endorsement of free love, passages like this—which, all else aside, implicitly endorsed birth control—had the effect of enabling many Catholics to do what they were going to do anyway, but without soul-withering guilt. (For the majority of American Catholics, birth control is not an issue; they practice it as much as other Americans do, and in good conscience.) The authors of *Human Sexuality* were prudential—but, admit, less repressive than the authors of Antioch University's rules governing what it calls "interactions," rules that obviate any possibility of spontaneity in human affection during one's college years and that dichotomize love and sex in a way that the Church wouldn't in its worst dreams do. "Interactions," indeed. How utilitarian—how transactional—can anybody get? ("Please, ma'am, may I move an inch higher? lower?" A finger's breadth can mean, if Antioch's rules, which require verbal assent to each escalation of physical intimacy, are read literally—as they are meant to be read—the difference between grad school and expulsion.) The thing the Church has always had going for it was the conviction, and the insistence, that love is transcendent; it was not something you weighed and measured but was given freely, and it multiplied, of its nature, and expanded.

In 1968, Pope Paul VI issued the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*, which condemned artificial contraception . . . and it was hard to find an American Catholic who wasn't, as a consequence, glum—who wasn't, as Andrew Greeley wrote, traumatized. "Disaster," he said, "was the result of a single decision made because of the decrepit and archaic institutional structure of the church, a structure in which effective upward communication practically does not exist."

It occurs to me that for the Holy Father to position his arguments between relativity and absolutism is coarse. There is an organic, subtle interaction at the intersection between the ideal and the concrete, in which Christianity is rooted. It is at that intersection that life happens.

In the press room, I talk with Jackie Lyden, here for National Public Radio, and born and raised a Catholic, about the Holy Father and women: In July, the Pope called on American bishops to fight "a bitter, ideological" feminism among some Catholic women that led (he said) to "forms of nature worship and the celebration of myths and symbols" usurping traditional celebrations.

Although I'm not quite sure what John Paul II was so worked up about, I myself get a little tired of women lying down on bare earth and communing with the roots of trees and writing bad prose about it (in the Christian tradition, the earth is not our solemn mother but our delightful sister; that is what enabled St. Francis of Assisi to laugh at nature as well as to love it); a hundred thousand years ago, when I was an editor at Ms. magazine, I had no great enthusiasm for women who sent in stories about eating cookies made with menstrual blood or about baked umbilical cords served with postnatal tea. (A lot of these stories were written by women who liked to call themselves witches.)

I have with me in Denver the manuscript of a book of quotations by and about the saints—*A Splendor of Saints*—by my daughter, Anna Harrison. I am gratified to see that when one reads the stories of the saints—the gore and the self-flagellation and the mortification of the flesh—there is a point after which one finds one has stopped being appalled and stops perceiving the saints (in particular, women saints, and their obsessive concern with food and with fasting) as self- or flesh-loathing.

The cumulative effect of stories about the saints is exalting; cumulatively, these stories glorify and celebrate the body—and that is because, as medievalist Caroline Walker Bynum writes, their point "was ultimately not rejection of the physical and bodily, but a finding of the truly physical, the truly nourishing, the truly fleshly, in the humanity of Christ. . . . Physicality was not so much rooted out or suppressed as [illegible] intersected with the divine. . . . Women reached

IN LIGHT OF THE ROTTEN FRUITS OF RELATIVITY AND INDIVIDUALISM, THE KEVORKIANIZING OF AMERICA, THE CLONING AND KILLING OF EMBRYOS, ONE MIGHT WELL AGREE WITH THE POPE THAT CERTAIN ACTS ARE "INTRINSICALLY EVIL"

God, not by reversing what they were, but by sinking more fully into it." Blessed Angela of Foligno, for example, fantasized about parading around unclothed, garlanded with rotting fish and meat; she was a glutton. . . . The Church could just as well have made gluttony the great sin as sex, my daughter says, and one sees her point: we eat the body of Christ. One could make a case that eating too much chocolate cake—or eating blood pudding—is a greater slap in his face than committing adultery.

It is natural for a woman to see her body as her *self*. Think of the paradigms: Eve's *body* was the arena and origin of temptation and sin; Mary's body was the arena of redemption, the source of her personhood and her saintliness. She is depicted in medieval paintings as a priest. "The reverence for Mary that we find in thirteenth-century women mystics," Bynum tells us, "is . . . reverence for the bearer and conduit of the Incarnation. The ultimate identification was with Christ as human." And the flesh of Christ was regarded, in the fifteenth century, as both male and female. Popular piety has always adored flesh and representations of flesh. Flesh was the occasion of our salvation.

We are our bodies. Mary *was* her body. The only two infallible statements ever made were made about Mary, and one was that she—in her flesh—had been assumed into heaven. Bodily. The faithful had believed that for a thousand years; the infallible statement followed upon near-universal democratic practice and belief.

"O my Lady, my life, O Queen of Heaven, O

now body is unceasingly praised in heaven with melodious jubilee by all the heavenly court, still I . . . desire with all my heart to render here on earth such praise

"May your sweet nose glory! By the power of the Holy Spirit, it never drew or sent forth a breath without all your delight being ever present in the presence

I honor above the mingled odor of all the spices and all the herbs that habitually send

"May your neck, your shoulders, and your back be perpetually honored above the charm of the lilies. . . ."

—St. Birgitta of Sweden

AUGUST 11

I order breakfast from room service. On morning TV, a black female fundamentalist invites me to "walk in the spirit and leave behind the lusts of the flesh. . . . Leave the natural realm," she says. I dive under the covers. . . . My lover's breath always smells like flowers, as the saints' are said to have done, though God knows he's no saint. Whenever he leaves me I solace myself with my own milky smell, which comes from his body and cannot be washed off. . . . The Pope is a fundamentalist. I wish he were not. I have had enough of fundamentalism in my life.

Isn't it odd: Catholics are said, by psychologists, who ought to know, to have more fun in bed than non-Catholics. Greeley says that research done by the National Opinion Research Center and the Gallup organization indicates that Catholics have more sex, and sex more often, than Protestants do, and are more playful in their sex lives, and enjoy sex more than Protestants do, and are more tolerant of homosexuals. And yet so many Catholics—divorced Catholics, Catholics who are, as we used to say, living in sin—suffer spasms of guilt over what Europeans call "these little sins of the body." (I include myself; I am divorced, and I am joined in an irregular relationship with a man whom I entirely and forever love.)

"Pope John Paul II tries to understand . . . to convince," says Joaquin Navarro-Valls, director of the Holy See press office. "He will not excommunicate. That is not his way." Perhaps not. But the real question is, How many of the faithful—if the encyclical demands of Catholics what they cannot in honor or love or conscience do—will excommunicate themselves?

This terrifying dichotomy of body and soul. I watch Johnny Cash and June Carter Cash on early-morning TV; they are singing "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" They have it all together, body and soul. John Donne had it all together; and we can, if we're lucky, remember a time when we were loved and in love and had it together, flesh and spirit one, the immortal glimpsed in the mortal.

Mass in the park—a sea of color in the dusk—a parade of smiling bishops in rosy zuchetti. Young people in saris and *salwar chamises* and silk kimonos (carrying oil-stained McDonald's bags) and Arsenio Hall porkpie hats. Vietnamese bearing soaring kites, and twelve children carrying a 16-foot rugged cherrywood cross (received by twelve young pilgrims in Rome on Palm Sunday in 1992 and carried thereafter throughout America, from Los Angeles to Newark, San Antonio to Portland, and anointed by the tears and prayers of the faithful). Bell choirs and banners, nuns clapping to the Gloria. Clouds of incense: "Come to me, all you who are weary." Organ and trumpet: "You have turned my mourning into dancing." Archbishop Stafford of Denver implores the kids to "make a difference." Well, who doesn't speak Oprah-ese/Renaissance talk these days? But is this why Augustine gave us his *Confessions* and God gave us Gerard Manley Hopkins? So that an archbishop could speak in Oprah-ese?

Each of them had been called to Denver for a purpose, the kids were told: *"Ask, why? Why am I here? Why am I alive at all? What must I do?"* The question spoke directly to teenage angst, giving it shape, giving sadness a purpose (*"Why am I born? Why am I living? What do I get? What am I giving?"*). Their faces and their bodies (crocodile lines, nudgy nuns, good-natured jousting) affirmed for one another that they were both normal and universal, and negated what they, ghettoized in mass culture somewhere between Pat Robertson and Barney, must often have occasion to fear: that they are freaks and marginalized persons, suffering from a kind of social psoriasis. Here they can retreat from their own cynicism; here it's cool to be Catholic.

On the short walk back to the hotel, I meet a con man. I do not know at first that he is a con man, although a less preoccupied fool would have known—his wife has died of cancer, he needs spiritual support (and money), he needs friends (and money), he needs to know where he can find a hotel room (and money). I have been walking in the moonlight thinking that one thing or another was a con—my conscience or the Pope. And I meet a con man. I have been thinking of Chesterton:

"The outer ring of Christianity is a rigid guard of ethical abnegations and professional priests; but inside that inhuman guard you will find the old human life dancing like children, and drinking wine like men; for Christianity is the only frame for pagan freedom. But in the modern philosophy the case is opposite; it is its outer ring that is obviously artistic and emancipated; its despair is within. . . . We might fancy some children playing on the flat grassy top of some tall island in the sea. So long as there was a wall round the cliff's edge they could fling themselves into every frantic game and make the place the noisiest of nurseries. But the walls were knocked down, leaving the naked peril of the precipice. They did not fall over; but when their friends returned to them they were all huddled in terror in the centre of the island; and their song had ceased."

I have wanted to be forever in a garden where the world was violently tamed and everything smelled sweet; I have wanted the walls to close around me like a warrior's shield; I have wanted to be held so



tightly there was no room for a mouse or a free movement or a doubt; I have wanted such support as would render vertigo of the body and the mind impossible. . . . I have wanted, but only in dark dreams, what I once had and threw away, in mingled gladness and disgust, to join the large and terrifying, wonderful world.

I have been in that garden, and I know that its sweetness owes nothing to life and everything to sterility; the shield is a shroud, and without movement there is death, an icy splinter in the heart. This is not a garden; this is the kingdom of the Snow Queen, whose wintry kiss turns the heart into a frozen lump; this is the garden where wolves clothed as lambs howl and ravens clothed as angels scream.

It is the garden from which one views the world with dread and loathing and the assump-

tion of spiritual superiority that is in fact a form of acedia; it is the sanctuary of souls doomed to love and to court the destruction of the astonishing world . . . the world they believe to be the devil's playground, his orchard of poisoned sweets. The Snow Queen is an apocalyptic bully. The lure of certainty—of everlasting safety within the walls of immutable revealed truth—is very great.

Back in my hotel room: on the television there is a commercial promoting safe sex. (Latex *gloves?*) It is so anti-erotic as to make one vow never to have sex again. And they call the Church repressive.

Oh, I am so glad, so grateful, not to be in the icy garden I lived in when I was a child. My mother combined the frankincense of martyrdom with the radiance of her beauty and the passion of her belief. After she became a Jehovah's Witness, I had a nightmare that was to recur until I left that sect: In the dream I stand in a walled garden; climbing red roses shine like bright blood against a whitewashed wall. An icy creature, resplendent, of indeterminate sex, calls to me; I feel the voice flowing through my veins. The creature extends its arms in a gesture magisterial and maternal, entreating and commanding; I am without will. I walk toward its embrace, fearful, unable not to abandon myself to a splendid doom. I am seized in its arms and hurled out of the garden; I fly ravaged through dark and hostile space.

Tonight, after television (the grating invective of my co-religionist Pat Buchanan the last voice I hear), for the first time in decades, I dream that dream again.

AUGUST 12

The air conditioner is blasting; I wake up icy cold. Only lottery-winning journalists who have been credentialed by the Secret Service are allowed anywhere near the tarmac when the Pope lands. I watch what I have come to see on television: Church luminaries together with President Clinton and his entourage (including Hillary Rodham Clinton and Chelsea Clinton, in polka dots) are waiting in a light rain for the Holy Father to arrive at Stapleton International Airport on an Alitalia Boeing 747.

"I have met four presidents. I am an old Pope. You are a young President." Was the President of what used to be called the Free World being rather clumsily complimented, or slyly condescended to?

Standing under a huge white umbrella under a lightning-streaked sky, the Pope defeats expectations and alludes to "the Subject"—abortion: "If you want equal justice for all and true freedom and lasting peace, then, America, defend life. All the great causes that are yours today will have meaning only to the extent that you guarantee the right to life." The President stands by impassively. They exchange gifts—a walking stick topped with an angel for the Pope, a Bible from the Pope to President Clinton.

A photograph of them walking together, each with hands locked behind his back and head down, is a study in maleness, a study in black and white, a study, ineffably, of narcissism. They look curiously compatible. And pale.

Two-hundred-foot-wide white streamers connect person to person when, later that afternoon, almost precisely on schedule, the Pope's motorcade emerges from the wings of Mile High Stadium, he in his white popemobile, a bulletproof modified Chevrolet Cheyenne four-wheel-drive pickup truck. Ninety thousand people pound their feet on the metal floor of the stadium. Seventy-five thousand more watch his image on JumboTron TV screens at Celebration Plaza. The kids, and teary nuns, combine hothouse ardor with seemliness.

(From the notebook given to the press: "When the Holy Father reaches the top step and enters from stage right the trumpets will sound and white doves will be released. . . . 4:21:10 p.m. Drummer: Song—Ethnic Drumming 4 minutes. . . . 1. Look around and see who is here. 2. Raise your banners and see who is here. 3. Stand up and say hello . . ." Spontaneity is not left to chance.)

The Holy Father greets his young people in French, Italian, German, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Croatian, Polish. He evokes the intercession of the Black Madonna for the Polish nation and, in Spanish, greets, "with particular esteem," Latin Americans, "heirs of a vibrant Catholic tradition, for which the Church is giving special thanks to God on the occasion of the Fifth Centenary of the Evangelization of the Americas."

Every time he utters the word "life" the crowd waves white handkerchiefs.

"We are in Denver! Denver, Colorado!" he exults, as if he can't quite believe it himself . . . as if the adulation and exaltation he elicits circle around and come back to reside in him.

He has come to listen, he says. What will he be able to hear above the sound of wild greeting and adulatory applause, the white noise of endorsing praise?

The Pope is perhaps, I think, a little mad, as people who are both extroverted and lonely frequently are. He has tics: when he reads a prepared speech, for example, he invariably, no matter how much he improvises, reads aloud the printed words THE END. John Paul II is an apocalyptic man; perhaps he sa-

In Denver, the pontiff often speaks of the human conscience as if it were a wild beast capable of being appeased, but capable also of turning on its owner with the ultimate betrayal—alienation from God

sures that we determine whether someone is sane or insane, congenial or dangerous to our safety.

I don't get the point of this Pope. I do not love him, as I understand love, but then there are a lot of people I don't get the point of—Joan Crawford, Brooke Astor, Robin Williams, Janet Reno. I didn't get the point of Richard Nixon until the day of his wife's funeral: when he broke and sobbed, I saw, and perceived, a Richard Nixon utterly different from the one who had inhabited my imagination, and I was able to construct and assign a whole universe of motives and feelings to him that had hitherto escaped me. I keep waiting for a single gesture, one defining moment, that will allow me to love the Pope, who is the head of my spiritual family, the man who says, "The world will be what we want it to be."

The gesture never comes.

He says that moral evil flows from personal choice, "because conscience itself is losing the ability to distinguish good from evil. . . . In a culture which holds that no universally valid truths are possible . . . good comes to mean what is pleasing or useful at a particular moment. Evil means what contradicts our subjective wishes. Each person can build a private system of values."

This is an affirmation of natural law, which is at the heart of *Veritatis Splendor*. Natural law has been defined as a force working in history that tends to keep human beings human; it is the objective truth that is written on every human heart. One is capable of obscuring the writing by sin; natural law is, nonetheless, everlasting—a question not of opinion but of the Truth. And morality are inseparable. Human reason cannot impose values on nature or create values of its own; humans must discover the values inherent in the universe and in the human heart.

"The Pope," said the Pope in Denver, "has not spoken against American civilization and television; he has spoken for an authentic promotion of what is civilization . . . of what is human dignity. . . . The root of violence is in the human heart, society will be condemned to housing it . . . even, to an extent, glorifying it, unless it reaffirms the moral and religious truths which alone are an effective barrier to lawlessness and violence."

The gesture I am waiting for will not come. In his encyclical—which he says was occasioned by "an overall and systematic calling into question of traditional moral doctrine"—the Holy Father, placing human dignity snugly and exclusively [illegible] teaching, says that morality is absolute and absolutely never a matter of subjective decision or the wisdom accrued from life experience or an educated conscience or a matter of intentions, circumstances, and consequences.

Sickened by the rotten fruits of determinism and relativity and individualism, one might well agree



with Karol Wojtyla, in light of the Kevorkamizing of America, the cloning and the killing of embryos, that certain acts are "intrinsically evil." But agreement isn't likely to be the response to the [illegible] assertion of the official Church's authority to determine in each and every case which acts are intrinsically evil.

The brilliance and beauty of Roman Catholicism, it has always seemed to me, was the autonomy granted one who allowed oneself to be [illegible] contained in the Creed) and wished to live without harm or damage to oneself or others or God: the Law, one felt, was indeed written not in stone [illegible] after scouring one's conscience and willing one's heart and mind to conform, one found oneself in legitimate disagreement over a specific Church teaching—well, the judgment call was left to

the Highest Court of Appeal. The Holy Father would not have it so: "Polarization and destructive criticism have no place within the household of the faith," John Paul II said in Denver, with which no good family member could disagree—one may find oneself, has found oneself, in loyal opposition to the Church; one certainly didn't maliciously seek polarization. But the encyclical, 179 pages and more than 40,000 words long, makes it clear that external opposition to the central teachings of the Church—as defined, we are obliged to assume, by the Incumbent —is punishable by the purging of dissenting moral theologians and the condemnation of Catholic institutions that allow dissent to thrive. And so, God help us, is internal disagreement. (How will he police this?) Papal authority has become synonymous with Truth.



The Holy Father, choosing, apparently, to overlook ambiguity in Scripture and tradition, says that universal moral wrongs transcend eras and cultures. This is his list of "morally unacceptable" sexual sins: contraception, artificial insemination, homosexual acts, masturbation, premarital sex, abortion, adultery. (The word "contraception," incidentally, appears only once in the hefty encyclical.)

In Denver, and in *Veritatis*, the Pontiff often speaks of the human conscience as if it were a wild beast capable of being appeased, but capable also of turning on its owner with the ultimate betrayal—alienation from God. Conscience "is not exempt from the possibility of error." He is adamant that the magisterium—the authority of the Church to teach religious truth—is not an optional source for the formation of conscience but is a paramount and absolutely necessary one.

At the Radisson, I see a young man running down the hall, flapping his arms. "He saw me! He saw me! He saw me!" he shouts. Some of the young people have the mystical belief that the Pope sought out and engaged their eyes and made contact with them among thousands.

I rummage through my files: "*We must feel the poverty of others as if it were our own, and convince ourselves that the poor cannot wait. Public authorities . . . must take on the unjust differences which offend the human condition of men and women who are . . . children of the same God.*"

Bravo, John Paul. This is the Church one loves. The Church that speaks for "*the sick, the elderly, the marginalized, the victims of violence, those who don't have work or decent housing, the displaced and the imprisoned; in a word, to those suffering in body or spirit . . . but especially for the most abandoned and dispossessed.*"

And *this* is the Church one loves: that evening at Mile High Stadium, something inexplicable, quirky, and, under the circumstances, bittersweet happens. The fourteen stations of the cross—the betrayal of Christ and his condemnation, his denial by Peter, his judgment at the hands of Pontius Pilate, and (scorned, rejected, spat upon, cursed, whipped, and crowned with thorns) his crucifixion, his promise to the good thief, his last words to Mary and the Beloved Disciple, his death, his entombment. After each station, moments of silence: meditation and prayer. This tableau is enacted by three people, the Fountain Square Fools, a Cincinnati theater group . . . and Jesus Christ, king of all the world, is played by a woman, Christina Brown (twenty-three, sloe-eyed, olive-skinned, long crinkly hair parted in the middle). The Reverend Dan Anderson of Cincinnati says, in what appears to be a desperate attempt to sound casual, "[She] looks like Christ." Joaquin Navarro-Valls says, "A woman can represent all humanity and all humanity was represented by the death of Christ." Such pleasure to mull over that, and not a little pain. It seems so simple: if a woman can represent all humanity, can she not be a priest? Why not?

The Holy Father is absent in the flesh; his visage is beamed in by satellite to Mile High Stadium. He had spent the day at Camp St. Malo, a Catholic retreat in the Rockies, where he was resting—reading poetry, praying, hiking. The Holy Father is photographed walking in the woods, holding a knapsack, wearing sneakers (gold laces) and a long white robe, very Comme des Garçons.

I BELONG TO A CHURCH THAT HAS SURVIVED MEDICIS AND CRETINS AND SCANDALS AND KNAVES. AND WHO KNOWS? PERHAPS HISTORY WILL REVEAL THAT THIS POPE WAS A GOOD POPE—OR AN IRRELEVANT ONE

Oh yes, I think, a little mad. He doesn't appear to find anything funny about wearing gold-colored shoestrings with his white sneakers in order for the pontifical colors to be correct.

"Do you think he's cuckoo?" I ask a colleague and a friend (male, gay, a kind man who feeds the hungry and clothes the poor, who believes that to leave the Church under present circumstances is a sin). "What if he is?" says my friend. "What is the Church?" he asks, and proceeds to define it—exactly what the Holy Father would call taking liberties with established truth. "The Church is the body of people struggling to live in the unity that was established by the Incarnation. We struggle constantly, constantly, constantly, against whatever odds and whatever forces, to help the community grow and flourish and survive. I refuse to leave. I'd have to be kicked out—but nobody's going to throw me out of my Father's house. I'd miss the tension too much."

As for me, I'd care nothing for a God who hadn't suffered; he'd be a bully. The only God I could believe in is fully God and fully human.

"The Church," my friend says, "has never really dealt with the implications of the Incarnation. Why did God choose to become a human being to effect the Redemption? He could have just said, Poof! you're redeemed. He ascended in the flesh; he still has a human nature. What are the implications of this? The Church has insisted that the liturgy have a sensory appeal—Hopkins calls the senses the inroads to the soul. It's been called idolatry, but candles and incense and music increase your spiritual susceptibility.

"But I find it difficult to give any thought to anything they say about sexuality because they've never really explored the role of sexuality and its relationship to the Incarnation ...and at the same time they're preoccupied with sexuality. It's only within our lifetime—Vatican II—that the Church acknowledged that sex had a purpose other than procreation. Before that they never acknowledged that the sensory exchange, the act of love between two people, had not only a validity but a necessity. Look what refusing to deal with the body leads to.

"The trouble the hierarchy has with women, and vice versa, rests on their being looked upon as a subspecies—which again contradicts the Incarnation. ... The inability to deal with the body led to the separation of men and women in the institutional Church. In the early Church there was no priesthood. The Eucharist was celebrated by equals. Over time, the eucharistic minister, the priest, the servant, became the master.

"Why should I leave? That would be fragmenting the community. Okay, the homily is boring, the music is bad. If you go to church anyway, you're making a statement: I can't worship by myself; I must worship in community as an expression of my belief that we are part of a larger community, holy and universal.

"God can do with nature anything he wishes—and there is homosexuality in nature. Let's acknowledge that sex is central—not something that should be indulged in at the least whim; you can't use people. No real systemic theology has been addressed to this. We say the body is holy and treat it as if it were poison. Jesus' humanity and ours are inseparable. ...

"We were loved from the moment of conception. The rights of a fetus derive from the fact that the fetus is loved by God. But how can I invite others to act on what I take on faith and can't prove? Can I ask a woman to be constrained by something that I can't prove in an area so central [illegible]

"I would go to my cat before I would go to my cardinal for moral direction. I don't pay any attention to him or to the Pope. But I have no reason to leave the Church."

John Paul II traveled back to Rome on an American Airlines 767 (Shepherd One) from which four seats were removed to accommodate a custom-made curtained bed (between twin- and full-size) draped in Belgian linen sheets and a down comforter. He could have seen a Michael Jackson video, had he wished, or a Madonna movie. He enjoyed a choice of roasted veal, beef tenderloin pignoli, chervil chicken, salmon with linguine. Caviar. Godiva chocolates. Häagen-Dazs. When he is at home in the papal palace, he drinks one glass of dry white Latium wine at supper; cows that produce milk just for him range near Castel Gandolfo in the Castelli Romani. Can one begrudge him this? Poor unmarried man. It's silly to get exercised over [illegible] pists in Denver did, frothing. Asceticism doesn't en-

dear itself to me as particularly adorable or ennobling. I used, when I lived in India, to step over the naked body of a Hindu holy man each day to get in and out of my Bombay flat. There he was, unmoving, eyes bloodshot and gazing straight ahead (his enormous member maintaining an enormous erection) among the weeds and rats and monkeys and passion flowers of my garden, as immovable, so far as I could see, as the sun. Sometimes my son, in whom the naked holy man occasioned no wonder, tried to share his banana-yogurt breakfast with him; the holy man—who subsisted on heat and dust and mortification—resisted my child's sunny claim on his attention. I used to wonder what was in his head; I still do.

I flew home from Denver through spectacular lightning, lightning like flowers, bursts of yellow, rose, blue, green. I fell asleep. (Whose was the nightlong breathing that kept my soul alive?)

The plane hit an air pocket and I awakened with a jolt, this conviction formed, born of a forgotten dream: I am not nervous about God. Where had my nervousness gone? The face staring back at me from the dark window—my own reflection—smiled a delphic smile.

"Even in our sleep," Aeschylus said, "pain that cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart, and in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom to us by the awful grace of God."

I flew away from Denver, but Denver was not far from me.

"We Are One Body, One Body in Christ." The theme song, which in Denver I had considered musically insipid, anemic, played in my mind as I sailed in the dark through flowers of light.

I belong to a Church that takes its terrible and glorious and kaleidoscopic 2,000-year-old inheritance seriously.

("Tradition," Chesterton wrote, "means giving votes to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about.... We will have the dead at our councils.") I belong to a Church that has survived Medicis and cretins and scandals and knaves. And who knows? Perhaps history will reveal that this Pope was a good Pope—or an irrelevant one. About one who commands and wishes to hold back the tide it is never easy to know.

It hardly seems to matter, in the flowers, in the dark.

"He receives every one of us," the Holy Father said. "We are accepted by Him. That is Communion. We receive Him and He receives us, and that is the full human life."

That is what matters: community, communion. Communion is the defining moment. We drink the wine; we eat the bread: we are one body.

A wall of orange lightning shrouds the throbbing plane, and I think of my last two days in Denver. ...

They marched, thousands and thousands of them, to Cherry Creek State Park. They walked fifteen unshaded miles. Walkers and runners talk of suddenly entering a "meditative zone." The rhythm of walking is the rhythm of prayer.

It was bitterly cold at night. They sang hymns and played liars' poker deep into the night; unprepared for the cold, they slept in sleeping bags, body to body. They were awakened by mariachi music, to a spectacular sunrise and lauds at 6:30 A.M., after which it was horrendously hot; they were unprepared for the heat.

A headline in the Sunday *Rocky Mountain News* read: OFFICIALS FEAR MEDICAL CALAMITY TODAY. It seemed (suddenly) to have occurred to everyone that there would probably not be enough toilets, and there would almost certainly not be enough water; and there would almost definitely be too many people for emergency personnel to deal with. The Arapahoe County sheriff got on TV to say, almost before the sun came up, "People are dropping like flies."

The sheriff and Sister Mary Ann Walsh, World Youth Day communications director, had a TV face-off (much grinding of teeth) about the safety of the event and the efficiency of the planning. "This ain't no bingo game," the sheriff said.

A sixty-one-year-old man died of a heart attack. Eighteen thousand people sought medical aid, mostly for heat exhaustion and dehydration.

To the thousands and thousands who had walked on Saturday were added thousands and thousands more for Sunday Mass: estimates put them at half a million. All along the way of the march people offered them cups of water—the poor dopey kids were drinking Coke and eating candy bars and getting dehydrated and falling into prairie-dog holes, spraining ankles and suffering altitude sickness, bee stings and blisters, exhaustion. Bottles fell from nerveless fingers. It was weedy, polleny, and moldy along the way. And the sheriff was right: access to water and to portable toilets was not good. People with houses along the park sprinkled the marchers with garden hoses to cool them off; later, firefighters did. The whole carried the halt. The Church is people, clergy and laity, moving, walking through life. Some of them are maimed.

Regarded in a certain light—the light that bathes and tickles the distant past—all of history, even and especially its tragedies and morbidities, consists of cosmic fun and games. The Church exists in time. In eternity there is no time. And God broods gently over us all. ■

FIGHTING IN THE SCHOOLYARD

A Massachusetts town divided by the cost and content of public education

One warm evening last June, at an appointed hour, the citizens of Hatfield, Massachusetts, came out of their houses. Shadowed by an elegant double row of Norway maples, they began walking along Main Street toward the distant light of the town hall, where they were to vote on the future of public education in their town. They passed houses with pillared front porches that had been built by an all-but-vanished farming gentry, and the town, its ancient public buildings now landmarked, probably did not look significantly different seventy-five years earlier. The atmosphere was so harmonious that after parking my car in front of Hatfield's lone barbershop, I had to pause for a moment and try to connect the quiet scene before me with the last public event I had witnessed in Hatfield.

Two weeks before, in the type of ugly confrontation that has become common in this small town of 3,400, these same citizens had hurled insults at one another across the cavernous space of their high school gym. Parents who used to sit next to each other at their children's sporting events now made a point of finding distant seats. Some had gone so far as to warn their children that they were not to play with, or go to the houses of, certain others.

Hatfield's agony had started over condoms—specifically, the decision by the town's school committee seventeen months earlier to make condoms available on demand to every student, seventh through twelfth grade, at Smith Academy, Hatfield's high school of 188 students. But it was not just condoms that had provoked these people to come to the town hall that night—not exactly. A town election had just radically altered the makeup of Hatfield's school committee by adding two anti-condom candidates; in the same balloting, the town's voters turned down a property-tax increase, which would have provided Smith Academy the extra funds it needed in the coming year to meet accreditation standards. Although nearly everyone in town rejected the notion that the vote against the tax was in any way a reaction to the condom controversy, it was difficult to see it as a coincidence: here, as in many towns across the country, a blurring of lines appeared to have taken place, and education was being made to suffer for what was a larger societal disagreement. It seems odd, but not inappropriate, that in this conservative little Brigadoon, an ancient, long-unquestioned social contract—that a town should pay for its children's free public education—is now, like a lot of old national assumptions, up for grabs. Versions of Hatfield's anguish, in fact, have been playing out across the country. In New York City, for instance, a battle over condoms, sex education, and school tracking brought down School Chancellor Joseph Fernandez. Citizens are saying: Our children will not be taught that way, not anymore—and not unless we can have some say

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great curiosity. How were the good citizens of Hatfield going to decide what education they would pay for?

With this question in mind, I climbed the steps to the town hall, where, as a non-citizen, I was instructed to take a seat in the balcony. From there I stared down at the populace: groups of massive, block-shouldered men in suspenders, old women clutching pocketbooks, and, among them, younger parents, some of whom had grown up in this town but many of whom had come [illegible]. Although their bodies and manner did not particularly differ from the larger group's, the new arrivals possessed a distinguishing alertness. Clearly, these were people—social workers, lawyers, environmental scientists, teachers, and office managers—informed by sources more cosmopolitan than the pages of the local newspaper, the *Daily Hampshire Gazette*. The more angry among this younger group were vocal. One woman shouted at a row of gray selectmen on the stage: "We only want for our kids [illegible]."

This new generation of parents had received a potent wake-up call at the contentious meet[illegible]. "We're not backward big-time," Fran Gougeon had warned them in a dramatic speech. He had recently resigned as Hatfield's superintendent of schools, and there was an undercurrent of anger in his bleak assessment of the future of Hatfield's schools if current funding trends were to hold. He also managed, none too subtly, to hint that it was the conflict between younger parents and older [illegible].

"A man said to me, 'Why can't there be thirty kids in a classroom?'" Gougeon had told the [illegible] up.' I couldn't answer him in five or ten minutes. I couldn't answer him in an hour. How many [illegible]?

I tried to explain. What people needed at the end of the Industrial Revolution was a kid who could walk out of high school into a factory and [illegible]

SOME PARENTS PROTESTED THAT THE SCHOOL'S DECISION [illegible] CONDOMS WAS ELITIST AND INFRINGED ON THE RIGHTS [illegible] FAMILIES TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT SEX

full.' That world doesn't exist anymore. If we don't teach kids today to manage information, we're not doing our job."

Gougeon's speech had produced its intended effect, and education-conscious parents had come to the town hall prepared to fight. Grumpily but overwhelmingly, the assembled group voted to compromise by asking the selectmen to take $98,000 out of the town's stabilization fund and give it to the school. (Stabilization funds are supposed to be maintained for a town emergency; there was some discussion on the floor about whether a school operating at below-subsistence level constituted an "emergency.") The sum of $98,000 was half of what the school originally had requested to fully fund its 1993–94 budget of $1.8 million, and the appropriation did not ease the minds of the parents who voted for the measure. Fran Gougeon had done his work well, revealing to his listeners just how bare-bones a figure $1.8 million represents when phrases like "our kids' futures" come into play. The younger parents filing out of the town hall last June had an ostensible reason to celebrate yet instead looked vaguely troubled. A Pandora's box had been opened in Hatfield, and $98,000—the most that could be spared—wasn't going to come near to closing it.

Hatfield is a kind of dream landscape, the place many of us want to move to. Six of its farms are still being worked (there were one hundred at Hatfield's peak, in the late 1920s), and whoever was responsible for the town's layout had an attentiveness to light worthy of Albert Bierstadt. On a typical summer day, you can park your car at the edge of a cornfield, stare off at a rotting tobacco barn, and, in the farther distance, watch the word ONIONS fade, with imperceptible slowness, into the grain of a weathered outbuilding. You will, in so doing, be witnessing a little of the history of farming in this region, and for twenty minutes another car may not come down the road to disturb your musings. Should you begin to tire of the pastoral, you have the comfort of knowing that you can drive just ten minutes and choose between two foreign movies or hear Suzanne Vega at the Iron Horse, a live-music café catering to patrons from the five colleges in the area. (Hatfield is nestled between Northampton and Amherst in the foothills of the Berkshires. Whack the bushes and an artist is likely to jump out.)

Over the past dozen or so years, the area has seen a great influx of people moving in from elsewhere, and it is this change in population, in

part, that has heightened awareness of what is going on in the schools. Gorgeous old Georgian and Victorian homes were going for well under $100,000 ten years ago, and even at the height of the real estate boom, in the late 1980s, Hatfield was still a relatively inexpensive place to live. Young professionals with growing families, people like Jay Smith and Jan Davis, from Long Island and suburban Maryland, respectively, found Hatfield congenial. Jay Smith, a spectator-sports tour operator, bought a house with a great view of fields and woods; Jan Davis, a speech therapist, purchased a wooded corner lot that renders her house and yard nearly invisible to passing motorists. The schools, as much as anything, were appealing. Hatfield had chosen not to send its kids to one of the huge regional high schools that have eased the financial pressure on similar rural communities but to replace, at great expense, its outdated junior and senior high schools with a $3.4 million state-of-the-art facility, which opened in 1980. Along with that decision came the town's commitment to support the school, to keep education "local."

The town's plans were assisted by the "Massachusetts miracle," which dulled the pain rendered by Proposition 2 1/2, a 1980 bill that has held down property taxes. In an atmosphere of vague but unquestioning support for the schools, a liberal school committee made up of trusted names was allowed to hold sway in a basically conservative community. The Hatfield school administration soon instituted an impressive list of new educational techniques, including peer mediation (students helping to solve one another's problems), mainstreaming (the integration of even severely handicapped kids into "normal" classrooms), and cooperative learning (students working together, independent of the teacher). The changes went on quietly. Giles Kellogg Sr., an older taxpayer who has become a fierce critic of the school system, characterized himself and others like him as having been "passive" during these years. Such a feeling is not exclusive to the elderly. Joe Zannini, one of the organizers of the fight against condoms, is a parent with two kids still in the system, yet he spoke as if from the other side of a divide as he angrily recalled the years in which he'd "blindly supported" the schools.

It would be convenient to say that condoms changed all that, and to a degree they did. Hatfield was the first community in western Massachusetts to make condoms available, leading far more liberal neighboring districts. The decision was a logical outgrowth of the way that the school had been run until then. Northampton, Hatfield's neighbor, has a large gay community, and the obituary pages of the local newspaper serve as a reminder that AIDS arrived in the area long ago. The disease was summarily and responsibly dealt with, first through seminars, videotapes, and peer-education workshops—health-education methods that most school systems in this country have begun to adopt. Then, in 1992, condoms were made available in the school nurse's office. A group calling itself PACK (Parents Against Condoms for Kids), a noisy, unsubtle organization that grew to power in the wake of the condom decision, insists that this was an elitist way of educating, that it infringed on the rights of families to teach their children about sex and relationships in their own way. "What happened to standards?" asked Melinda DiMambro, an incensed mother of four who hails from Oklahoma. "If they're not going to teach that sex before marriage is wrong, they shouldn't be teaching anything at all." There also are those parents who say the best thing to have come out of the condom debate was an awakened electorate suspicious of, even hostile to, the educational establishment and ready



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Joseph Zannini points a toy pistol to his head last night to dramatize his contention that condoms are not foolproof. Zannini is one of the organizers of a group opposed to distributing condoms to Hatfield high school students.

JEFF HOLLAND

Powerful images

Hatfield reconsiders condom availability

By SAM SILVERSTEIN
Staff Writer

HATFIELD – It was an evening that saw one parent hold a toy gun to his head and pull the trigger and a 13-year-old girl emotionally explain that students are sexually active.

With powerful images and words, Hatfield is still wres-

Gun owners frown on toy gun prop

By COSMO MACERO JR
Staff Writer

Gun enthusiasts say Joseph Zannini used the wrong method – a toy gun aimed at the head – to deliver his message on condom use.

"You just don't do stuff like

Zannini pulled a toy gun in front of a crowd of 100 people in Hatfield pointed it to his head and squeezed the trigger on a Third Game of Russian



to go into the voting booth and pull no, no, no

It was a surprise, then, when Smith told me he'd be taking his daughter out of Breor Elementary, the public grammar school, to enroll her in the Waldorf School two towns away. The Waldorf is one of several private schools in the area, serving the children of Smith and Amherst faculty members and others nervous about the fate of their children in public school.

"She's a real artsy kid; loves music, loves to write," he explained about his daughter. "She goes home at seven years old and her favorite thing to do is to go up to her room with a tablet and write. Books, little stories, which we've never prodded her to do. And we don't have any of that for her [in the public system]. Not to say she can't continue to do that by herself. But if she's got more of that available to her, maybe she'll enjoy it more, do better."

During the budget skirmishes of the past several years, one of the first things to go in Hatfield was the elementary music teacher. (Her part-time salary would have amounted to little more than $13,000.) Hatfield's part-time elementary art teacher was kept on, at $14,000, not because art was deemed more important than music but because she had been in the school system longer. Other areas of the curriculum have been threatened, too: the elementary school library has stayed open only because of parent volunteers. In the Parent-Teacher Organization, cookie sales and field-trip fund-raising have given way to more serious efforts: last year the kindergarten teacher asked parents to help raise money to buy tables for her classroom. *Tables?* There was no money for such luxuries in the school budget.

"For me," Jay Smith said, "the straw that broke the camel's back was when they threatened to cut the library. It didn't add up. How can you have an elementary school, where your beginning of life and learning is books and reading, and you have no library?"

Jan Davis, who is keeping her son in public school, at least for the time being, said, "I'm angry. My kids are only going to get to experience this once. Stop messing around with my kids' lives. This is serious. Art, music, library, math . . . they're all important. You don't get to go through the fourth grade again. If you've had a year of paucity, you don't get to re-enrich that year. You don't take them when they're eighteen and try to bring them back and say, 'Here, let me show you the magic.' And education can be magical."

There's more than a hint in those words—"paucity," "magic," "enrich"—of the social division underlying the debate in Hatfield. Many parents like Jan Davis came here from elsewhere with advanced degrees and thus brought a certain set of educational expectations with them—

they are, admits one, "education snobs." The parents and older voters in PACK, on the other hand, seem more influenced by Catholic morality than by, say, the educational tenets of Maria Montessori. The involvement of such parents might be bothersome to a school administration hard-pressed to please even the least demanding of its constituents, but this is not a group that can be easily ignored. The administration needs to be able to call on these people, especially with the closing of libraries and the increasing need for volunteers to staff positions for which there is no longer adequate funding. Given all this, I was initially taken aback by the response I got from Linda Driscoll, Fran Gougeon's replacement as Hatfield's superintendent of schools, when I asked her whether it wasn't a threat to the health of the system to see involved parents such as Jay Smith siphon off their kids to private schools.

"I feel we have everything here to educate these children," Linda Driscoll told me, perhaps defensively. "We have all the indicators of a good school system. It bothers me that we have parents taking their kids out of the system because [the kid] can't have all the experiences the parent might want."

Her answer struck me as odd because of what it left unstated: a parent complaining about the loss of music, even of libraries, is asking for too much. After all, Driscoll seemed to be saying, their children are still receiving the basics, and Hatfield's teachers, whose basic starting salary is a low $21,048, are considered an unusually dedicated group. The problem that parents were responding to, however, has less to do with specific cuts than with a shift in philosophy.

It's difficult to spend much time around educators, to listen to their language and read their statements of mission, without becoming aware of how radically the focus of public education has shifted from the days when I was in public school, in the 1960s, a member of the honors class, a group that got the best teachers and the most attention. What one now hears most often in closed sessions among school administrators is institutional fretting over words like "inclusion"—taking those who have been traditionally shortchanged by public schools (the learning-disabled, the slow learners, the historically unencouraged) and making them feel as important as any other students in the system.

Although one may agree politically with such a sea change, there is still a conflict between the schools and parents with expectations. In supporting the school system's current political bent, parents must confront the possibility that they may be undercutting their own children's opportunities to compete in the college market. Linda Driscoll's reference to "the indicators of a good school system" is meant, I assume, to include Smith Academy's impressive college-admissions statistics: 97 percent of the school's graduates go on to *somewhere*. But the institution is rarely Harvard or Brown; most graduates move on to community and state colleges. Thus the brave new world of an inclusion-based system has required, for a certain kind of parent, a very hard and deliberate swallow.

PARENTS WHO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL'S CURRENT PHILOSOPHICAL BENT MUST CONFRONT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THEY ARE UNDERCUTTING THEIR OWN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

In fact, though Superintendent of Schools Driscoll may not mention it among her reasons why parents should stick with the public system, the best defense Hatfield has to offer right now may be the spectacle offered by scenes like the one several students witnessed two springs ago, one they would not have seen had they been shipped off to a private school: at yet another school-committee meeting, otherwise unremarkable, the father of one of their friends, affable, funny Mr. Zannini, lifted a gun to his head and threatened to pull the trigger.

Joe Zannini, a bluff man who suggests an Italian version of the actor John Goodman, claimed he was only trading in the coin of metaphor. He had felt for a long time that he and other members of PACK were not being listened to when they tried, in a reasoned, responsible manner, to present material questioning the efficacy of condom availability: "[The school committee] did not hear a single piece of the research. We were being dismissed as a right-wing, radical group." Holding a gun to his head (it turned out to be a toy, though for several heart-stopping moments most of the people in the room were fooled) was a way to get everyone to pay attention to his assertion that condoms have only a 69 percent rate of success, and that using one, especially to prevent AIDS, is about as risk-proof as playing Russian roulette. (In fact, condoms typically have an 84 percent rate of success.)

In retrospect, it's easy to see how the educational establishment in Hatfield misjudged the degree of passion the condom issue would elicit, as well as the potential it had for pushing all other topics off the table. More liberal districts,

many districts that have gone ahead with condom distribution without parental consent. Although Hatfield parents have to sign a form allowing fluoride treatments for their children, they were denied any choice in the matter: their children could walk into the school nurse's office and slip a three-pack of condoms into their wallet.

I have seen otherwise reasonable people quake with fear at the prospect of their own daughter being given such an opportunity. Condoms are [illegible] very much how they are perceived in Hatfield: as tacit condonation, on the part of a public institution, of teenage sex. Of course, schools have always had an active part in furthering the nation's health agenda, from inoculations in the 1950s through drug and alcohol awareness programs in the 1980s. But members of PACK felt strongly that condom availability was less a further step along this well-worn path than an encroachment into private, closely guarded territory.

Halina Wilkes, one of the anti-condom candidates elected to the school committee last May, is a woman in her mid-thirties who is given to putting up a smiling, impervious front on [illegible] occasions when she is attacked verbally. She is the one, after all, who insisted, at her first school committee meeting, that such an elective institution should make an effort to be "pro-family." She claims, however, that it is the schools themselves that have forced her into this position, through their insistence on putting into place a series of programs that presume the family neither wants nor has a right to participate in the child's sexual and social upbringing.

When I asked her to give me an example of [illegible] other than through condom availability, Halina Wilkes was quick to mention "the Dartmouth video." I'd heard about it already; the video was made at Dartmouth College, using student actors in fictional [illegible] which school students how to make "good choices." It had caused quite a stir in Hatfield last year after being presented in a peer-education class taught by Leslie Giordano, then Smith Academy's school psychologist. Wilkes thought parts of the video were "neat," particularly the demonstration of role-playing, but other aspects of the video led her to question the judgment of those who [illegible]

"Why should sophomores, juniors, and seniors have to listen to graphic descriptions of anal sex [illegible] because he didn't want his partner to put on a condom], 'Hey, I love the taste of you in my mouth!'"

To be fair, Halina Wilkes exaggerated. Though Dartmouth College keeps its sex-education material highly guarded (and a copy of the tape conveniently seems to have disappeared not only from the school psychologist's office but from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, which once offered it for rent; a woman I spoke to there said it was "out of date" and no longer available), I managed to get hold of a transcript of the video. What the two gay characters talk about is how awful condoms taste, and then they go on to suggest a series of water-based foods (chocolate syrup, blueberry jam) that can be lathered onto the condom to make it taste better. However "reasonable" all this may sound, there is something numbing about it. Educational, yes, but also joyless and, to the parent of a teenager, somewhat terrifying.

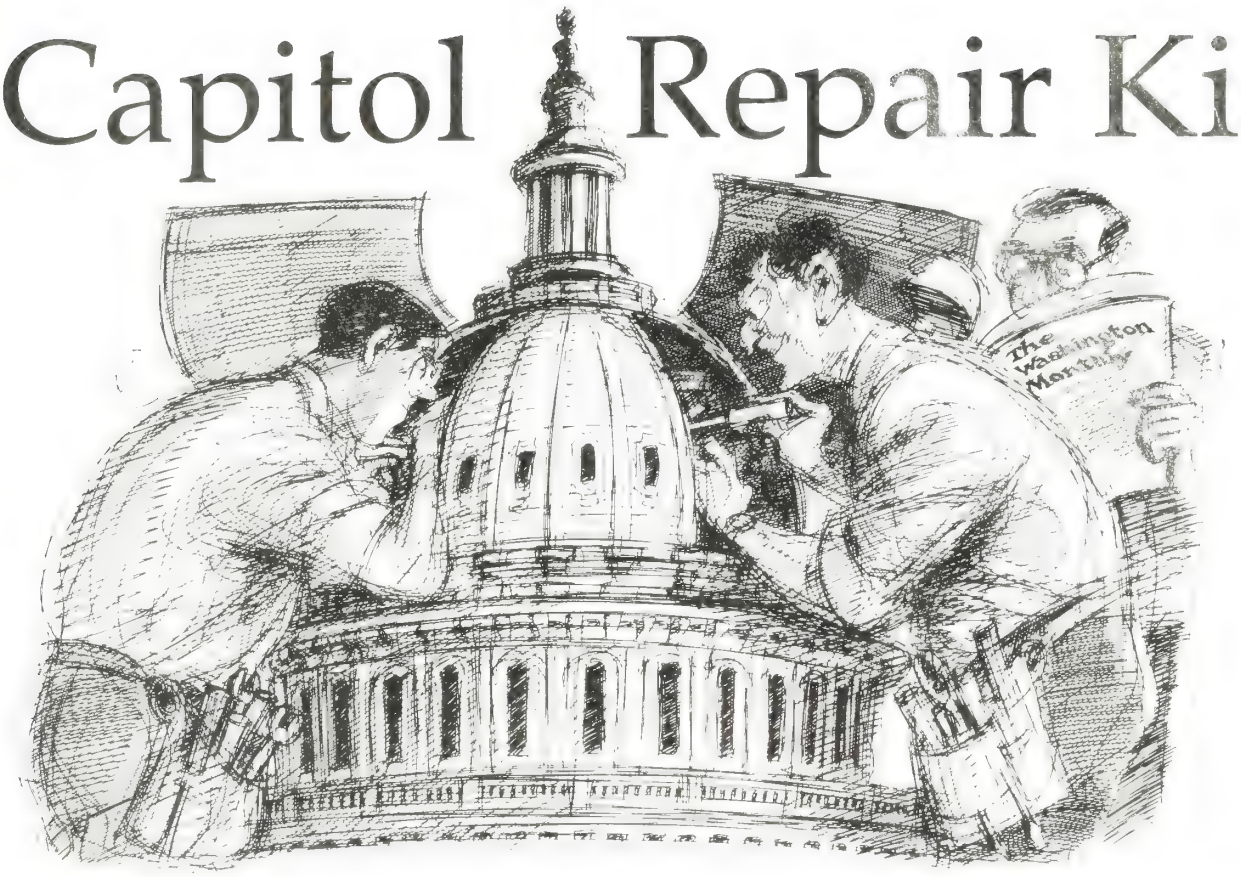
I'll admit, if forced to, that this information might be essential to my fourteen-year-old daughter's education, but a creepy feeling in the stomach follows this admission, and it is in large part an institutional insensitivity to such creepy parental feelings that landed Hatfield in hot water. There was never a meeting at which local parents were asked, Do you *want* us to be doing this sort of thing? Instead, Leslie Giordano would have us all face up to the fact that we have no control over our kids, that they're having sex when they want to, and that we'd better make sure they're doing it safely. Because of this attitude, she became a particular target of PACK. But she insisted to me that it goes deeper than that.

"[If] you're a psychologist, you're a threat to people," she told me, with characteristic bluntness. "What I represent is what's difficult for people to talk about. When kids come to me, they're telling me family secrets. I'm not prying things out of them—it's not like, 'I'll give you candy if you tell me what your daddy did to you last night.' They tell me things because they're in pain. So I'm a threat."

When Joe Zannini and Halina Wilkes respond, with anger, to this aspect of a school's mission—to attend to hurting kids—they are remembering growing up in a neighborhood in which everyone knew everyone else's business and neighbors took care of neighbors' children. To such a tightly knit community, the school was expected to be, at best, an accessory, a place where you learned the three R's and little else. "At one time, schools *reflected* social values and attitudes," Joe Zannini insisted to me, "as opposed to *leading* social values and attitudes."

The school administrators I spoke to disagreed with this assessment and rejected the claim that what they are doing is in any sense "ahead" of

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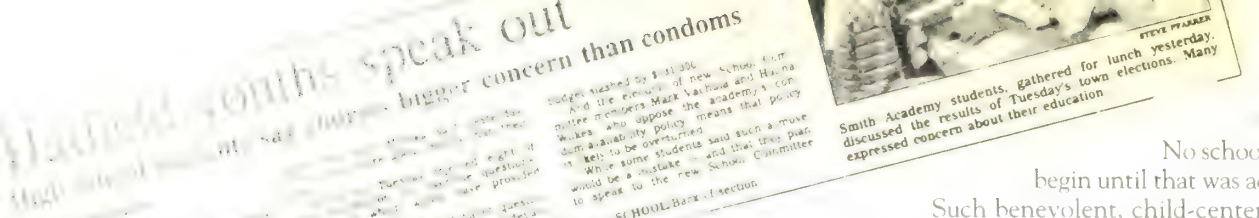
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Hatfield youths speak out
bigger concern than condoms
Smith Academy students, gathered for lunch yesterday, discussed the results of Tuesday's town elections. Many expressed concern about their education
STEVE PFARRER
see SCHOOL, Back of section

society at large.

After all, it's not just teenage sex Hatfield has been forced to respond to. There have been two student suicides within the last six years, and the kids themselves admitted to me that drinking is a real problem among them, as are drugs and eating disorders. Still, it's the very fragmentation of even seemingly homogeneous communities like Hatfield that makes this "response" a slippery and troubling one to defend. Schools like Hatfield's get into trouble because they misapprehend the vulnerability of the American family and its resistance to being told how inadequate it is. A sizable portion of Hatfield's population has come to look upon the schools, as Mary Williams, one of the town's pro-condom school committee veterans, put it, as "this monster or something out there trying to break us apart."

A tension not dissimilar to Hatfield's arose in New York City in 1992, when then-Chancellor Joseph Fernandez made the suggestion, as part of a new curriculum, that books featuring children with two daddies or two mommies might be a way of helping certain children feel better about their own, very 1990s, living situations. Ideas like this [illegible] reviewed as extremist assaults on the family, but the philosophy behind them is pervasive in contemporary education. It even has a

THE YOUNGER PARENTS TOLD ME THAT OLDER VOTERS [illegible] ABOUT THE SCHOOLS; *THEIR* KIDS, AFTER ALL, HAD ALREADY GONE THROUGH THE SYSTEM

name: affective learning. The idea is that the way kids feel about themselves is more important than what grade they might get in Algebra II. Learning disabilities, children who come to hate school, the dropout rate—these problems are seen to relate somehow to the way a child feels as she crosses the threshold of a school building. Does she feel safe there? Can she be made to feel *good*, whether or not she has been made to feel good at home? It's rather startling, in this context, for me to remember a classmate returning to our sixth-grade homeroom after the sudden [illegible]. He sat at his desk and was asked to open his geography book; none of the rest of us said a word. I was told this would not happen today, at least not in Hatfield. A circle would form at the beginning of the day, and the child would be encouraged to express his feelings.

No school work would begin until that was accomplished.

Such benevolent, child-centered programs mask a social agenda, say people like Joe Zannini. When I presented his reaction to Linda Driscoll, she bristled. "We've *always* had a social agenda. We've *always* had a part in helping to socialize children. I think more is being asked of us in that way by what shows up at the school door every day."

Hatfield teachers told me that they routinely hear stories of sexual abuse, domestic violence, the trauma of divorce—all of this while they are trying to get through a day's lesson. "What do you say—'That's not my job to deal with it'?" Linda Driscoll responded when I asked her whether teachers might be taking on a bit too much. "You develop structures to deal with the social needs. As an elementary school principal, what I found was that one of the social needs we had to respond to was children learning to solve their own differences and be independent and accepting of controlling that conflict in their own lives. It wasn't [a situation] where we said, Wouldn't it be nice if children could learn this social skill? We saw it as a social *need*."

Yet other critics question how much of what the schools are doing socially is done out of strict necessity and how much grows out of a philosophical bias, a desire. They would be disturbed to know that I spoke to one teacher who said the real thrust of her day was to do what she could to prevent the kids in her classroom from turning into the twelve-steppers she feels surrounded by in the adult world. There's something admirable in that, something true to what a teacher's role has traditionally been, and also in its overtness, something deeply presumptuous. This teacher's attitude regarding the expanded social role of the schools is, in part, what brought Smith Academy into conflict with people like Joe Zannini. Yet his demand that communities be allowed to do the work of socializing also reveals a blindness to contemporary reality.

Overlaying this conflict is a whole other issue: if the school day now has to contain such topics as conflict resolution, circles of affirmation, and—in later grades—health and sex education, is there enough time to teach, in an adequate, not to mention challenging, way, the basics? Although most of the teachers I spoke with insisted the answer was yes, it was clear that some of Hatfield's parents were asking themselves the same question. "I have a son," Halina Wilke said, "and this year, at least two or three times

lay, the teacher would have to stop the class to try and solve a conflict involving other kids. And that meant seat work for my son. A lot of times the conflict was instigated by the same kid, and I don't think John learned anything from what was going on. After a while, one of his friends said, 'That kid knows he can stop the class.'"

All of this loud and fractious battling might have remained something the school could have worked out for itself were it not for the fact that, in its quest for funds, Smith Academy had to lay itself open to the public. The result was a painful reminder of how much power remains with the otherwise silent voters of a town in determining what a school may or may not do. For all of the rhetoric at state and national levels, public education is still funded largely through local property taxes. Thus Hatfield's schools are not really going to be able to take a step forward until they can bring around people like Ted Kabat, a retired farmer and policeman who is notable in Hatfield for having served, at some point in his seventy-two years, on nearly every public committee in the town. He is also the person who spearheaded the sixteen-year movement to build the new school facility. To demonstrate how difficult it had been, he offered to show me the boxes of clippings he'd kept; others in town had wanted to save money by regionalizing. "I didn't want the kids to get lost in the shuffle, [to] become numbers," he told me, his voice marked by faint traces of a Polish accent. "I wanted the teachers to know who every kid was, who [his] parents were."

How ironic, then, that Ted Kabat, like a great many of his compatriots, voted no to Hatfield's higher school budget. Unlike most of them, however, he'll readily, even proudly, admit it.

"My retirement income was cut 60 percent," he told me, referring to the fact that interest rates on CDs, his mainstay, have declined precipitously in the past several years. "Anybody realize that? I lose 60 percent of my income, and a teacher wants me to fund a 5 percent salary raise in a downhill economy? Have a heart; bite the bullet a little bit. Suffer with the rest of us. The fact that you suffer a little bit, even the kids will learn from it."

On the day I visited Kabat at his farmhouse, the light was low and the sky overcast; perhaps this bleak image gave his philosophy arresting force. But his views stayed with me as I tried to figure out what it is about contemporary education that so *bothers* a man like Kabat. I couldn't help but remember Kabat when, last September, Hatfield held another town meeting, this time to request funds for sports. Back in May, high school athletics, perhaps Hatfield's deepest source of community pride, had mysteriously been voted down at the polls. A great deal of trumped-up drama surrounded September's special meeting, though no one seriously doubted the outcome. This time, my lonely balcony was full of high school jocks—noisy, stomping, quieting only as the vote neared. A selectman announced that the delinquent back taxes on a local business property had at last been paid up; the town voted to give the found money to the school. There were loud cheers, and then the meeting moved on to the next order of business. A stocky, somewhat tongue-tied man stood up. He was the superintendent of Hatfield's Highway Department, and he wished, he said, to request a modest raise. For twenty humiliating minutes, he was forced to argue his case in public—the unpaid overtime, the seven-day weeks in winter when he got up before dawn to plow the roads. I looked around me. None of the kids was listening. In fact, they'd gone back to their highly animated secret dialogues.

It occurred to me then that if any of the younger parents on the floor had wanted to make a play for Ted Kabat's support, they could have stood up and pointed out to these kids that their gain—money for sports—meant someone else's loss. But such a subtle, real-world point seems to have no place in the contemporary dialogue about education. Certainly younger parents, in their arguments, betray a blind spot in their approach to men like Ted Kabat. "We only want for our kids what you got for yours" remains central to their case (an argument that conveniently forgets that Ted Kabat's kids didn't get peer mediation or mainstreaming, not to mention Apple computers). Or else they cry, "Children are our future!" These younger parents told me with a single voice that older voters "don't care" about the schools; *their* kids, after all, have already gone through, so they're essentially unthreatened.

But Ted Kabat's cool response to such a charge reflects a more complex fact. Had the property-tax increase been passed, his tax bill would have gone up about $2 per thousand dollars of assessed property. For a man sitting in a house worth more than $100,000, with twenty acres of corn growing in his backyard, the increase



In Hatfield, pleas for the schools

By STEVE PFARRER
Staff Writer

HATFIELD — One year ago townspeople crowded into the Smith Academy auditorium for an emotional debate on the issue of condom availability.

Last night they came back — but this time the issue was funding for the schools.

The School Committee meeting in the Smith auditorium attracted a crowd of some 150 people — including about three dozen Smith students — who had come to see how the schools intend to grapple with a $131,000 budget cut that one person said "could be the beginning of the end of education in Hatfield."

For well over one hour, the committee heard often emotional comments from students, par-

Rachel Tarr, one of the leaders of last week's

gram.

"We're getting cut big time," he said.

While several residents urged the School Committee and others to try and get additional funding from a June 8 Town Meeting, the board tabled a decision on the matter until Friday night when another meeting will be held in the Smith auditorium.

New committee chairman Patrick Vaughan — who was joined by last week's election winners Mark Vachula and Regina Wilkes — told the crowd that the schools could be enjoyed by the state-educ[illegible] reform bi[ll] which provides significant fun[ding] increases for

[illegible] "It appears that the time has come," he told [illegible]. "[when] the parent is going to have to con[illegible] [illegible]ecause the burden is too great on the taxpayer. In other words, when I was going to school, taxpayers paid for my education, okay? But what did the education the taxpayers paid for encompass? I'm willing to do the same. But all these other frills—you want them, you pay for them."

[illegible] a turning point has arrived, and something of our [illegible] in the next few years. The Ted Kabats are abandoning us, and we are having to face up to the political diversity in the towns where we have chosen to live. Meanwhile, other members of our generation who have opted for private school have their children on the fast track, and we can't help but feel anxious about [illegible] how it's [illegible]

At present, it's hard to dodge the fact that the [illegible] is suggesting something unpleasant about us—about our long-harbored tendency to ask our institutions to take [illegible] We school systems have been asked to do everything: to educate the mind, to educate the body, to build self-esteem, to offer ways to solve conflicts.

Is it naive to suggest that, with some creative thinking, there might be another way to shoulder some of this societal burden? In New York City and elsewhere—St. Louis, Denver, Chicago—certain model schools have begun staying open later, in effect ceasing to be schools after 3:00 P.M. and becoming community clinics where medical and psychological services may be offered to the child. This division of the school day into hours of teaching and hours of caretaking is a first step toward freeing the schools to do again what they have traditionally done well.

Or is the really hopeless suggestion the other one I am making—that we start thinking differently about what can reasonably be accomplished in our schools? In Hatfield, now that condoms are gone (the new school committee killed off the availability policy, as expected, last summer) the discussion might have a chance to move elsewhere: toward the curriculum, for instance, or toward teacher training. But as the school year began last September, the most pressing order of business was whether to institute, in the words of Linda Driscoll, "an abstinence-based curriculum." The anti-condom members of the school committee were for it; the old pro-condom forces [illegible] against.

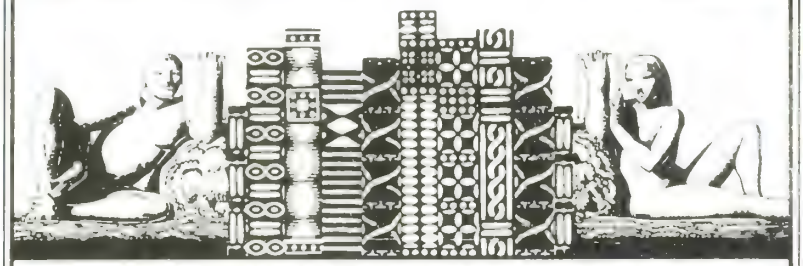
The subject of abstinence, however, had already entered the classrooms. Corey Kopinto, a sixteen-year-old junior, told me, "[The teacher] had strict rules. She made a *chart* of when things are getting out of hand. Like she'd do this chart with holding hands, then it'd go to a short kiss, then a prolonged kiss, and then she'd write DANGER ZONE. That is *garbage*. It shouldn't be restrictions, restrictions, restrictions. When people are ready they're ready. That's what's gonna happen."

Corey Kopinto was quick to tell me that *he* wasn't ready, not yet, for he had too much else on his mind. He added that the availability of condoms had done nothing to make him *more* ready. In fact, it may be years before Corey Kopinto comes out from under the barrage of information (which began for him in the sixth grade), warning what can happen to him if he makes a wrong move, sexually speaking. I listened to his graphic description of chlamydia and heard about the videos showing the effects of AIDS on the body that have become routine viewing at Smith Academy. At a certain point I wanted to say: Enough. This boy has been sufficiently educated about sex. Now give him Spanish III before the teacher is cut. Get him in to a good college.

Such a wish may be naive and would certainly be deemed irresponsible in the current climate of public education. An anxiety has taken hold, and we now pile all of our concerns about children into those hours between 8:00 A.M. and 2:30 P.M. They are packed, underfunded hours. They will almost certainly result, if the current movement goes unhindered, in healthier, more self-aware children, children better able to resolve conflict, armed with all the information they will need to avoid contracting sexually transmitted diseases. It might be that, on some primary level, this is in fact what we want the schools to do, and that all the talk of "excellence" is after-the-fact hypocrisy. It's hard to dodge this conclusion, given the contrast between the passion worked up over sheaths of latex and the tepidness of the national debate over standards of learning. The culture of caring has seeped so indissolubly into the infrastructure of our schools that it seems inseparable from what now goes by the name of education.

In Hatfield, there is much talk now of "moving on" and "moving past" the conflict, but what I found was a town encased in indecision and fear, a place where relations among neighbors and between school and parent are cautious—as if the wrong utterance will bring about another call to arms. Hatfield's signal glory these days seems to lie in how fully, and painfully, it has taken the measure of our disagreement.

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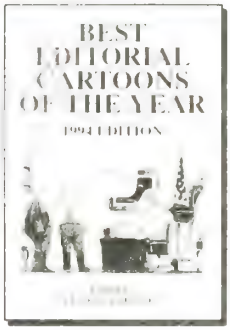
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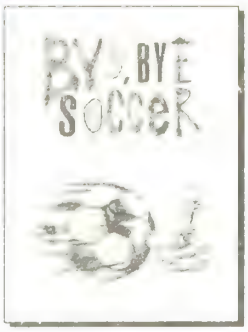


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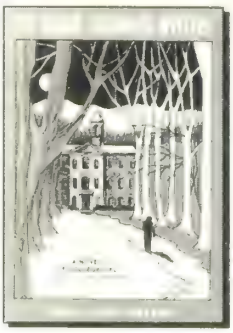
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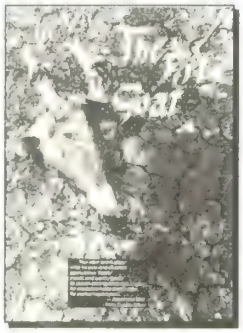
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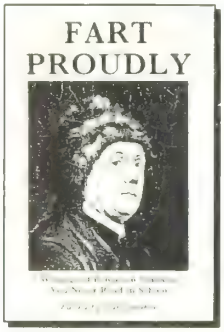
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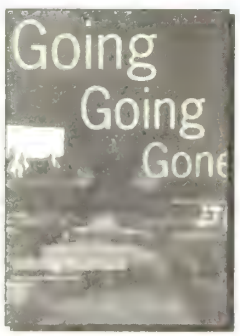
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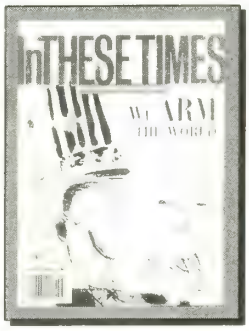


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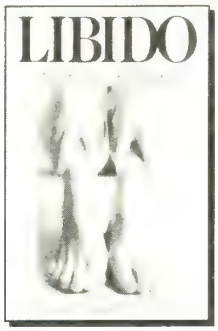


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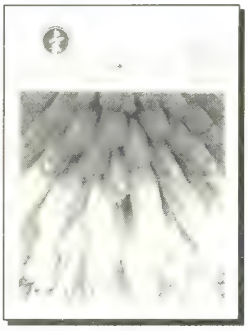
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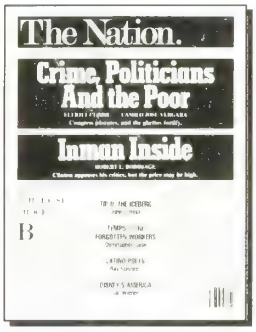
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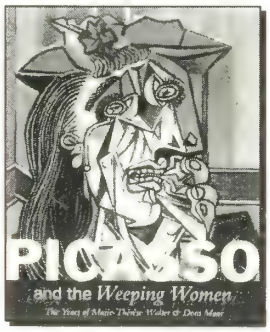
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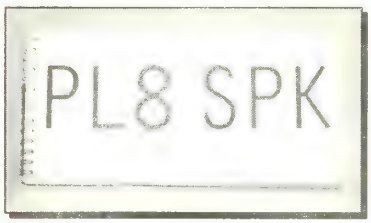
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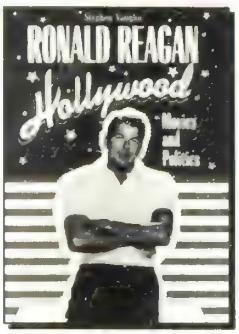
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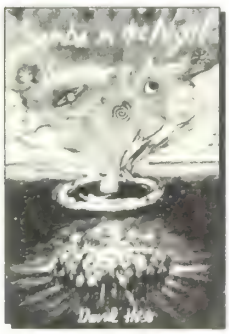


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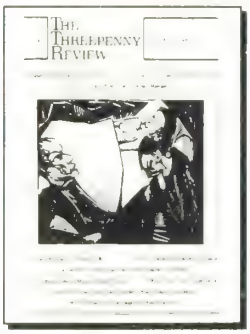
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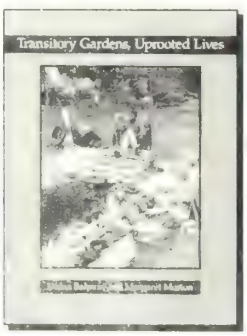
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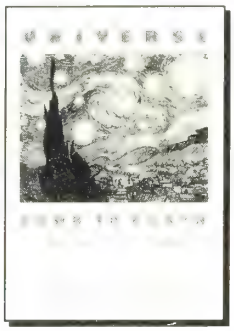
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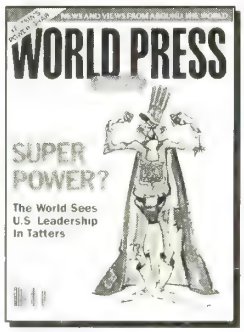
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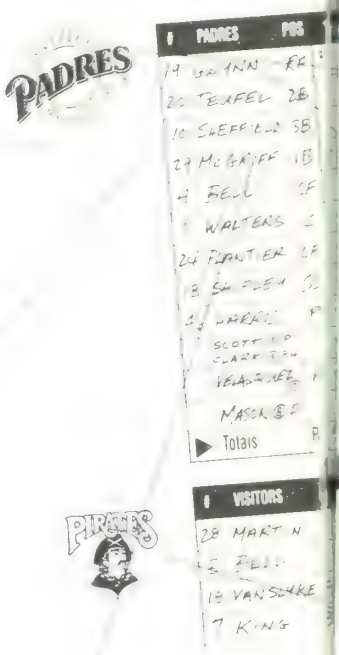
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THE GREAT SA

How and why baseball's mar

Opening Day crowd at Jack Murphy Stadium did not know, however, was that the Padres' management—a consortium of businessmen headed by television producer Tom Werner—had hit upon a plan for making money without actually winning ball games. Eyeing the team's star-studded lineup, one Padres owner asked, "What if we win? What will happen to the payroll?" So the front office decided to cut the heart out of the Padres batting order in a frenzied effort to reduce payroll costs. When the smoke cleared, Werner, whose credits include *Roseanne* and *The Cosby Show*, had slashed the payroll from $28 million to $10 million, the lowest in the majors. As the 1994 season opens, other major-league baseball franchises may emulate the San Diego experiment—cutting payroll and getting rich from "shared sources," a euphemism for income earned irrespective of a team's performance.

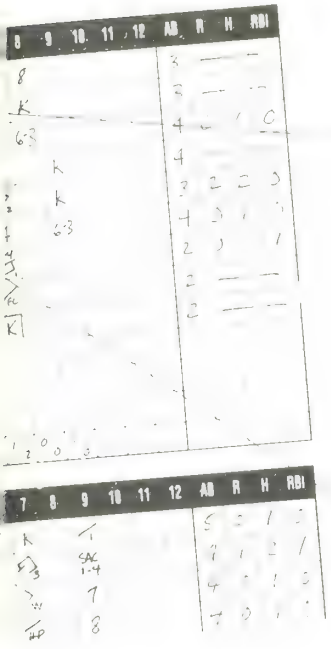


Jim Lefebvre on June 24, the same day he was named to the Padres twenty-fifth-anniversary Dream Team. His departure, which saved the Padres nearly $3 million, provoked a class-action suit from two San Diego season-ticket holders. Only twenty-four when he left the Padres, Sheffield had won the National League batting title in 1992 and just missed becoming the first player in a quarter century to win the triple crown (by leading the league in batting average, home runs, and runs batted in). "To see Sheffield go just crushes you," said San Diego right fielder Tony Gwynn. "He's everything you're looking for in a franchise player." The Padres settled the suit, but the Sheffield giveaway signaled to the sports world that the great corporate fad of the

First baseman Fred McGriff was traded to the Atl Braves on July 18 for three minor-leaguers. McGriff, only player in the modern era to have led both leagu home runs, then propelled the flagging Braves to t third straight division title and finished fourth in league's Most Valuable Player balloting. It's common struggling teams to trade marketable stars for prom but untested younger players, but the minor-leaguers Padres acquired were not even the Braves' top prosp Atlanta exulted that it had pulled off the trade of decade. The Padres saved another $4 million. A later, pitchers Greg Harris and Bruce Hurst were dumped, along with their multimillion-dollar salaries Padre fans, it was déjà vu all over again. The previous management had unloaded shortstop Tony Fernan outfielder Darrin Jackson, catcher Benito Santiago, p er Craig Lefferts, and reliever Randy Myers, in an omi prelude to the Great Fire Sale of '93.

IEGO FIRE SALE

plays to lose, *by Kevin Baker*



The marketing of major-league logos (on caps, T-shirts, jackets, baseball cards, and other souvenirs), worth about $2.5 billion annually, further illustrates how the sport's corporate structure rewards incompetence. The value of a franchise's logo usually fluctuates with the team's on-field performance: a winning team will sell more plastic bats and bouncing-head mascots. But because proceeds from such sales are considered "shared sources," they are divided equally among the twenty-eight teams—thereby shielding lesser squads (like the Padres) from the annoying vicissitudes of the marketplace. The greatest shared source of all is baseball's national television contract (worth $400 million in 1993). In earlier decades, teams earned only a tiny percentage of their total take from shared sources; winning on the field was the only reliable way to boost revenue. Nowadays, some teams earn more than half of their income from shared sources. The Padres made 54 percent of their total 1993 revenues in this way.

Tony Gwynn, four-time National League batting champion and the sentimental heart of the Padres, was given a three-year, $12 million contract extension in January. Critics allege that the Padres' strategy is to retain enough talent to make a decent showing on the field but not to contend for first place. The team succeeded only in the latter aim. They dropped the home opener by a score of 4–2 and went on to lose 101 games in 1993, finishing dead last in the N. L. West, behind the expansion Colorado Rockies. On an average day at Murphy Stadium, only 17,000 out of 60,000 seats were filled. This season, prospects are no brighter. But management celebrated a banner year in 1993. With income from shared sources (including a onetime fee that each N. L. team received from the expansion clubs), the Padres earned $34 million before the first pitch was thrown. The team's management still claims it lost $3.7 million in 1993, but outside analysts insist that the club made a tidy profit last year. Baseball owners are notorious for distorting their ledgers by amortizing players—who are clearly employees—as "equipment," folding losses from other businesses into their baseball operation, or creating paper corporations to buy their team and then "paying back" their usurious debt.

Pirates are another "small market" team having trouble ping its top players. After winning three straight division es, the Pirates lost standouts Doug Drabek and Barry ds—the greatest slugger of his generation—to teams of ng huge, multiyear free-agent contracts. Teams in small- ities complain that because they can't negotiate the big l TV contracts that large-market teams can, they can't pete for the top stars. But baseball's proposed solution, a enue-sharing agreement reached in January, will provide ers another layer of protection from their own incompe- ce. The wealthiest teams will pay as much as $5 million a pool from which the poorest teams can draw up to $9 lion apiece. Yet baseball already has a federal antitrust mption designed to protect its competitive structure. at's more, teams routinely extort lucrative tax abate- nts and cheap stadium rights from their municipalities in hange for not leaving town. Hence, in the brave new ld of baseball, the taxpayers of New York and Chicago soon be paying wealthy California businessmen huge s to keep their ball clubs in the money—and out of the ning. ■

DEATH NEWS

Requiem for the *Hemlock Quarterly*

By Anne Fadiman



The *Hemlock Quarterly*, an unassuming little newsletter that until recently was the chief perquisite of membership in the Hemlock Society, may have been the only radical publication in the United States whose subscriber rolls were dominated [illegible] women with gray hair. I've met many of these women, and I can attest that they were the sort of communi[illegible] grandmother who never littered, never stole anyone's parking place, and always returned their library books on time. With the help of *HQ*, these model citizens laid down a store of knowledge that would enable them, if they so chose, [illegible] enlisted to effect a mass public relations expert wa[illegible]

[illegible] newsletter to prepare for the [illegible]

of physicians, politicians, and academics—in short, the humble gadfly was going corporate. When I heard this, I decided to reread all fifty-three issues, the complete *HQ* oeuvre from 1980 to 1993. Perusing them one by one, every three months, had been like looking at a collection of still pictures. Reading them in rapid succession, in a two-day thanatological orgy, was like thumbing through a macabre flip-book that charted the entire course of the modern American right-to-die movement. As the *Hemlock Quarterly*'s swiftly evolving notions of what was morally acceptable flashed past, the face of Karen Ann Quinlan dissolved into that of Elizabeth Bouvia, who became, in turn, William Bartling, then Arthur and Cynthia Koestler, then Roswell Gilbert, and finally, like a grinning death's-head, the face of Jack Kevorkian.

The Hemlock Society's First Voluntary Euthanasia Conference was held in the spring of 1983 in a drafty Unitarian church on the outskirts of downtown San Francisco. In that innocent, pre-Kevorkian era, the Hemlock members were already old, tired, and none too healthy looking, but the right-to-die movement was still young and pure. I was one of only two journalists present. The sound of rain against the stained-glass windows contributed to the atmosphere of reverent sobriety. The small audience of mostly female partisans huddled together in the front pews, umbrellas furled at their feet. This was a congregation far too decorous to shout "Hallelujah!" but a WASP susurration of assent swept through the nave of the church whenever one of the speakers formulated a particularly high-minded aphorism: "Let us value the quality of life, not the quantity." "Suicide ends the living process; euthanasia ends the dying process." The featured speaker was a professor of ethics who declared that although self-determination for the terminally ill

was a praiseworthy cause—indeed, a sacred trust—the members of Hemlock must never compromise their moral probity by going too far. She referred to this concept as the Camel's Nose Argument. Once the camel's nose was under the tent, one had to take careful precautions to prevent the rest of the beast from following suit.

I remember thinking, as I looked around the church, that the camel didn't have a chance. I had expected a cell of wide-eyed sansculottes and had found, instead, a genteel sorority of senior citizens. I was sure they would never let their movement go anywhere untoward. In fact, I wondered if they had the chutzpah to let it go much of anywhere at all.

That night, however, I lay on my motel bed and idly scanned a copy of the *Hemlock Quarterly* that I had picked up on my way out of the church. It was printed on cheap, uncoated, canary-yellow paper—an "up" color, as Hemlock's founder, Derek Humphry, explained to me later, "because although we support self-deliverance, we don't want to seem a death-and-doom type of an organization." Its logo was the Rx symbol superimposed over a hemlock plant. Though the *Hemlock Quarterly* looked like something that might be published by a particularly unsophisticated PTA, I knew before I had reached the second page that I had found the true cradle of the revolution.

Most of the presentations at the Hemlock conference had been about passive euthanasia, or letting people die: hospices, living wills, plug-pulling. The *Hemlock Quarterly* was miles ahead. It advocated active euthanasia, or *helping* people die. Its lead article was headlined LET DOCTORS SUPPLY LETHAL DRUGS. Lest this seem too avant-garde a concept, the newsletter slyly reprinted a concurring opinion on the subject, dated 1516. (In Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, the victim of a painful, incurable disease, convinced he was already leading "a sort of posthumous existence," could be "given a soporific and put painlessly out of his misery.") The conference had dealt in abstract principles; *HQ* dealt in the real miseries that real people wanted to be put out of—quadriplegia, dementia, lung cancer, breast cancer, brain cancer, stomach cancer, ovarian cancer, Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, macular degeneration, emphysema, strokes, colostomies, catheters, bedpans, bedsores. All of the conference speakers had hewed to the official Hemlock line, which sanctioned suicide only in cases of terminal illness; *HQ* intimated that terminal ignominy might sometimes be sufficient cause. The issue I had picked up featured two accounts by readers of the suicides of their elderly mothers. One woman, after trying unsuccessfully to kill herself by pressing on her jugular vein, spent thirty-three days starving herself to death; the other died from an overdose of painkillers. Though the self-starver was comforted in her final days by the scent of carnation leis and the sound of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, it was not hard to guess which death the editors favored. I had underestimated the members of Hemlock. In the pages of their newsletter, the camel was already in up to the first hump.

> READERS WERE SEEKING A RECIPE THEY WOULD USE ONLY ONCE BUT THAT HAD TO BE NOTHING LESS THAN PERFECT

I've read *HQ* ever since, courtesy of Hemlock's unflagging media comp list. It arrived like clockwork every three months, a totally subversive little rag that seemed endearingly unaware of its own bizarreness. Though some of its subject matter was highly technical, the space it allotted to letters from readers lent it a cozy tone, a kind of kaffeeklatsch approach to self-annihilation. In its homely pages, moral questions that had traditionally been co-opted by philosophers were returned to the more experienced hands of M.B., of Laguna Hills, California, and Mrs. F., of Arizona. The pleasures *HQ* afforded me were entirely voyeuristic—I was young and healthy and knew nothing of suffering—but I liked and trusted M.B. and Mrs. F., and I always looked forward to the newsletter's arrival, even though it always made me sad.

The Hemlock Society was launched in Los Angeles in the summer of 1980 by Derek Humphry, a British journalist who had helped his terminally ill first wife, Jean [illegible], die, and Ann Wickett, Humphry's second wife, an American academic. The name was Wickett's idea. She and Humphry agreed it had a noble Socratic ring, although they did not recommend hemlock as a suicide method, since it can cause painful convulsions. The society's general counsel advised Humphry to spread his gospel of peaceful self-deliverance via the printed word; the First Amendment would be Hemlock's shield. Thus was the *Hemlock Quarterly* born. Its maiden issue appeared in October 1980. Humphry and Wickett edited it, wrote most of it, laid it out in their garage, trundled it around the corner to a printer of wedding and bar mitzvah invitations, and licked all the stamps themselves. It had 443 subscribers, most of whom had contacted Humphry after Hemlock's first press conference. Its final issue had 39,463. *HQ* never put on airs: though it grew from five pages to fourteen, though its paper stock changed from yellow to white, though its typeface enlarged to accommodate the uncertain eyesight of its elderly readers, the fifty-third issue of the quarterly looked just as rinky-dink as the first.

During the thirteen years that elapsed between issue No. 1 and issue No. 53, the right-to-die movement passed a succession of extraordinary milestones that *HQ* both recorded and influenced. If any matter concerning euthanasia appeared on the front page of the *New York Times*, one could be certain that it had already been reported—sometimes years earlier—by the *Hemlock Quarterly*. The very first issue contained a bellwether article about physician aid-in-dying in the Netherlands. Six months before Dr. Kevorkian facilitated his first suicide, *HQ* ran a brief profile of him and noted that he would be the next speaker featured by Hemlock's Michigan chapter. When Robert Harper, the first Hemlock member to be charged with murder, was tried for assisting his wife's suicide, *HQ* not only covered the case

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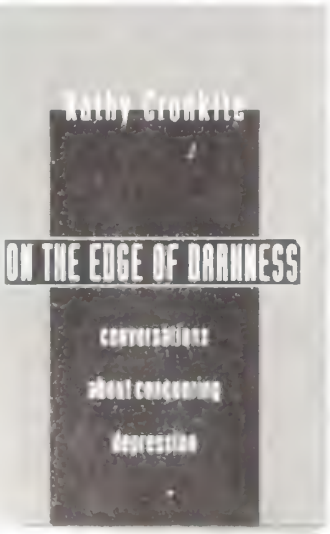
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including the author herself—discuss their personal setbacks, losses, and ordeals, and their ultimate victory over a disease that afflicts 24 million Americans every year.



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but raised $14,000 to pay the defense team Hemlock had engaged. Harper, who wore a Hemlock GOOD LIFE, GOOD DEATH pin throughout his trial, was acquitted.

In addition to covering news, *HQ* reviewed books, movies, and plays with suicidal themes; published jokes about terminal illness; ran obituaries of prominent suicides, noting with pride if the deceased had used a Hemlock-approved method of self-deliverance; printed the addresses of inmates convicted of mercy killings so that Hemlock members could send them sympathy cards; and, aware that it was blessed with an elderly readership with bequests on their minds, solicited contributions ("All gifts, donations, legacies to the Hemlock Society are tax deductible under 501c3 of the IRS tax code"). *HQ* also offered Hemlock videos for $20 ("idea to show friends"); GOOD LIFE, GOOD DEATH posters for $6 ("a striking wall decoration"); and publications ("Why not give some of Hemlock's books as Christmas presents this year?").

The *Hemlock Quarterly* did not merely report to its readers; it actively courted their participation. The very first issue noted that "each of us has a story to tell; by sharing it we can all grow." The letters department functioned as a community bulletin board that allowed Hemlock members, even those who would never again leave their beds, to get acquainted, lend one another support, trade advice, and complain about their infirmities (but never to excess, because they were chin-up sorts). Mary K., of New Jersey, the victim of a paralytic stroke, noted briskly that the essentials of her life were "Shakespeare, a bedpan, soap, water, and wash cloths, in that order." J.B., of Pennsylvania, who was afflicted with degenerative muscular atrophy and fecal incontinence, noted, "I freeze vegetables all summer from my husband's garden; I go out for dinner or Atlantic City Casinos when my bowels allow me." Both women ended their testimonies by saying that if they became further incapacitated, they wanted the option of suicide. Even those *HQ* readers whose health was not yet precarious let it be known that they were keeping a weather eye on

heir futures. Gloria Moorer, of Tacoma, Washington, whose mother had died a lingering death, wrote that she had failed to obtain liquid morphine for her own stockpile and had therefore turned to high-risk sports:

> When I began to be concerned about the possibility of suffering a similar fate to my mother's, I decided to take up every dangerous physical activity that I could think of. I learned to down hill ski at 50, to windsurf at 55, to roller skate at 60, and I started cross country biking this spring at 64.... I kept thinking I'll go over a cliff, or drown at sea having a wonderful adventure, and instead, I get healthier and healthier! There is a terrible irony here, as my fear is not of dying, but of dying slowly. Can you suggest any solution for me if my doctor doesn't buy the insomnia routine?

Some readers simply wished to share cheerful stories about family members who had made their exits after drinking champagne, eating blueberry yogurt, listening to favorite pieces of classical music, or, in the case of the mother of J.R., of Canada, reciting the Twenty-third Psalm before she took a dose of barbiturates and was asphyxiated by a plastic bag her daughter had secured with a silk scarf. "On occasion," noted J.R., "I still wear that same silk scarf, with pride."

To fathom why nearly 40,000 readers spent $25 a year for four measly issues, you need to understand the genre of periodical to which *HQ* belonged. You might be tempted to compare it with other journals that have political agendas, such as, say, *International Socialism* or *Libertarian Digest*, but that would be a misconstruction of its true nature. *HQ* was really a how-to magazine, like *Needlepoint News* or *Bon Appétit*. Its readers were recipe clippers. They were seeking a recipe they would use only once, but whose ingredients, and methods of preparation and consumption, had to be nothing less than perfect.

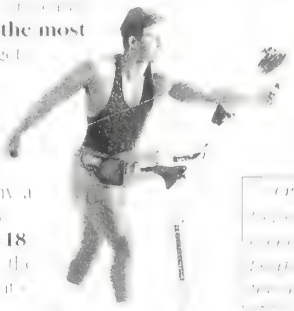
The editors of *HQ* knew this from the start, but in the newsletter's early days, they were prohibitively fearful of being prosecuted for furnishing the instructions their readers craved. The first year of *HQ*'s publication,

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Introduction by Paul Fussell

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lection traces all aspects of the mo-
vations from
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wife-turned-ship-
fitter to the
homesick German foot soldier; from
the war correspondent under attack at
Guadalcanal to a soldier's rage at the
second-class treatment he receives
upon his return from war. Authors in-
Shirer, Margaret Bourke-White, J. B.
Bernard DeVoto, and Rebecca West.

WORLD
WAR
TWO ERA

FRANKLIN
OF

promoters. Hemlock's British ana-
trouble: its general secretary had been
cide, and its executive committee was
publish
Hemlock Quarterly issues were
full of
lock's attorney about "the risk of se-
organization might run by merely ad-
vocating suicide as a responsible op-
tion for terminally ill patients, even
er procedural advice."

HQ ran no risks, of course, by telling its readers how *not* to commit suicide, so its editors filled many pages with methodological caveats. Because "most Hemlock members are gentle, civilized people and would not wish their loved ones to witness their bodies mutilated by gunfire," firearms were out. Hara-kiri was also advised against. Since I doubted that many Hemlock members had contemplated death by disembowelment and decapitation, I initially wondered why the editors deemed the subject worthy of coverage, especially in a full-page article so richly detailed as to seem almost prurient:

> In a very few cases hara-kiri was carried
> the ritual execution. In
> to
> and then cut the ab-
> dominal
> cut the
> This is very important
> because one cannot die of bleeding by
> cutting the abdominal wall only.

It occurred to me that the readers of *HQ* were not just potentially suicidal; they were *connoisseurs* of suicide. They might enjoy reading how to slice up an abdomen in the same armchair spirit as a subscriber to *Gourmet* might relish learning how to slice up a wild boar, knowing that it was so hard to buy, so hard to cook, and so laden with cholesterol that she would never actually

Inch by inch, year by year, the camel crept into the tent. In the very
references to "barbiturates" and "seda-
tives." Then, in 1981, it ran a short list
...ology, the Basic Science of Poisons;
The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics; and three others—that contained "information on bloodless and painless lethal methods of self-deliverance." The information, however, was available only to those readers willing and able to go to the library, read hundreds of pages of small print, and ferret out the relevant material. As time passed and no police came knocking at their door, *HQ*'s editors became incrementally more daring. Even if they could not publish recipes that looked like recipes, they realized that they could sneak the material into their newsletter by dressing it up in various respectable disguises. (Their determination to print drug dosages reminded me of Wolcott Gibbs's account of *Life* magazine's "bothersome and heroic struggle . . . to figure out a way to print a picture of a living, breathing woman with absolutely no clothes on" in their G-rated pages, a challenge to which they rose by photographing a life-drawing class at the Yale Art School.)

One of *HQ*'s favorite vehicles for suicide tips was its book reviews, which over the years must constitute one of the strangest bodies of literary criticism ever published. In a review of *Exit House*, a memoir by the artist Jo Roman, Derek Humphry casually mentioned "the final night when [Roman] took 4.5 grams of Seconal." Betty Rollin's *Last Wish* was praised for its writing but castigated for its pharmaceutical errors: ". . . the capsules specified in the book under the trade name Nembutal and of 100 milligram strength are described as 'shiny, red, gelatin-covered capsules, no bigger, each one, than the head of a match.' The 100 mg Nembutal capsules are a gold color (the only Nembutal which are even partially red are the 50 mg variety) and are much larger than any matchhead."

The most reliable Trojan horse for the conveyance of suicide formulas was the letters department. Eyewitness accounts of suicides, reprinted without comment, kept the editors' hands clean, the correspondents safely anonymous, and the readers apprised of how their fellow Hemlock members had handled situations they might in the not-too-distant future face themselves. A typical sample:

At the age of 89 years and five months, on a beautiful sunny afternoon, in a pretty feminine bedroom overlooking a patio of flowers that she had raised and tended for almost 20 years, my mother went peacefully to sleep as I sat and held her hand and talked her over the rainbow with relaxing Yoga meditations.

She gave me the gift of life and I gave her the gift of peace. Thanks also to you. Enclosed is a donation to your work.

My mother's prescription for death was one Dramamine (as anti-emetic), then a 20 minutes wait, then tea and dry toast. Another 20 minute wait, then 25 Seconal of 100 mg rapidly taken and washed down with whiskey and soda.

Grateful member
(Name and address withheld)

In 1988, *HQ* finally threw caution to the winds and published a straightforward Drug Dosage Table listing the lethal dosages of eighteen common prescription drugs: Amytal, Butisol, Valium, Dalmane, Doriden, Noctec, Dilaudid, Miltown, Noludar, Demerol, Dolophine, Norflex, Seconal, Nembutal, Darvon, codeine, morphine, and phenobarbital. It was captioned: "*Only* for the information of members of the National Hemlock Society for possible self-deliverance from a future terminal illness.... *Keep this document in a secure, private place.*" (Hemlock is no longer so circumspect. Today anyone can buy a copy of the drug table for $3.50. Call (800) 247-7421; Visa or MasterCard accepted.)

Knowing what dosages to take was of no help, of course, if *HQ*'s readers couldn't get the pills. One recommended avenue was faking insomnia to procure barbiturate prescriptions. Another option was traveling to foreign countries where some of the recommended drugs might be available without prescription. Like any tourists eager to share shopping tips, *HQ*'s readers sent in bulletins about their success in obtaining phenobarbital in Bangkok or Norflex in Vancouver. Mexico was the favored—though not a foolproof—drug mecca. Henry L. Brod, of Florida, wrote that he and his wife, equipped with "the immensely useful January 1988 *Hemlock Quarterly*," in which the Drug Dosage Table had been printed, "flew to Merida, in the Yucatan, and decided to

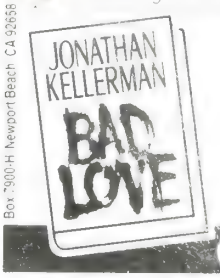
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it drugs, even if

teed. They might lose consciousness before they swallowed the full dose. They might vomit. If they had built had been taking regularly, they might need more pills than they had anticipated. The only fail-safe technique was to back up the drugs with a belt-and-braces policy; namely, a plastic bag. The very idea seems to make bers queasy, partly because suffocation is such a universal fear, partly because a person with a bag on his head doesn't look like himself, and partly because plastic bags are so cheap, so banal, so housewifely, as if Tupperware had been discovered to have lethal properties.

editors considered the notion of plas- ly unmentionable. Then, in 1988, in Drug Dosage Table was printed, a British physician named Colin Brewer wrote, "Now some people are . . . worried about appearances. They think that it is a bit undignified to be found by your nearest and dearest a point, but I don't

it will fit into a rub-

this technique at his local Hemlock chapter meeting, where "everyone was both amused and im-

To understand how truly radical it was to publish explicit information about how to kill oneself, let us remove ourselves momentarily from the *Hemlock Quarterly* and look at how the mainstream press was handling the question of suicide methods. In 1986, I wrote an article for *Life* about Lois and Paul Martin, terminally ill members of Hemlock who had committed suicide together three years earlier. I knew what drug they had taken, and how much—the dosage had been printed in their *HQ* obituary—but my editors and I decided to omit those details. In fact, in Mrs. Martin's handwritten medication chart, which was reproduced on the first page of the article, we even retouched the name of the drug so as to render it illegible. What exactly were we worried about? I don't know about the editors, but I imagined an elaborate scenario in which a depressed teenager, after stealing the pills from his parents' medicine cabinet, would be found dead with a copy of *Life* on his bedside table, page 71 turned down, paragraph one marked with a yellow Hi-Liter, and my culpable byline exposed to the world's damning scrutiny.

Last November, *The New York Times Magazine* published an article about the assisted suicide of a young, terminally ill woman. The drugs that killed her—forty Nembutals—were not only specified in the article, they were printed in 18-point type on the cover of the magazine. During the seven years that had elapsed between the publication of those two magazine articles, a monumental shift in popular thinking about suicide—about what is taboo and what is not—had taken place. I can think of no other major social issue of the last decade about which public opinion moved so far and so fast. The shift can be largely ascribed to the Hemlock Society's 1991 Humphry's nuts-and-bolts suicide manual, and its subsequent ascent to the top of the nonfiction best-seller list. The book received an enormous amount of publicity. Some critic praised its candor; others seemed in credulous that such incendiary mate rial had been allowed into the public Fantasy. None of them mentioned probably because none of them know that *Final Exit*'s most contro versial chapters, including its drug chart, had been printed years earlier in the *Hemlock Quarterly*.

According to a recent study published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, copies of *Final Exit* were found near the bodies of twelve New York City residents who committed suicide in 1992: my nightmare scenario come true. Three other suicides left notes they had copied nearly word for word from page 82 of the book. Of these fifteen *Final Exit* readers, five had psychiatric histories and six not only weren't terminally ill they weren't ill at all. These deaths received little national attention, although few er than ten years ago, when suicide manuals published in France and Great Britain similarly facilitated a series of "wrongful deaths," there was a flurry of headlines and lawsuits. I do not believe *Final Exit* should have been suppressed—for better or for worse America was ready for it—but I find it unsettling that the slackening of suicide's taboos has relieved death not only of its impediments but also, it seems, of its sting.

In the fall of 1989, Derek Humphry left Ann Wickett three weeks after she had undergone a lumpectomy for breast cancer. Two years later, Wickett, who was depressed but not terminally ill, swallowed a fatal dose of barbiturates and left a note for Humphry that read, in part, "There You got what you wanted." Shortly after Wickett's death, Humphry resigned his dual positions as executive director of the Hemlock Society and editor of the *Hemlock Quarterly*. He maintains that he had wanted to retire for years but could afford to do so only after *Final Exit* made him a rich man, or at least a man who didn't need a pension plan, something Hemlock had never been able to provide.

Thus far Humphry has enjoyed an energetic retirement. Last year he published *Lawful Exit*, a well-researched history of euthanasia-law reform. He

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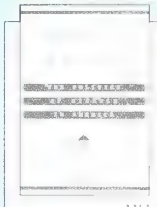
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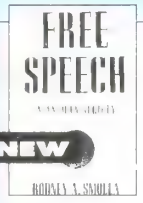
[illegible] of the [illegible] Democratic and Republican parties [illegible] in power. Walter Karp's acute insight reveals the sorry state of politics in America. **Paper, $14.95.**



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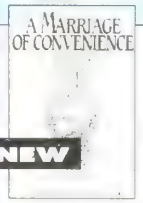
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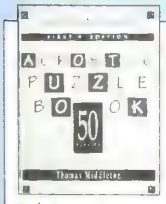
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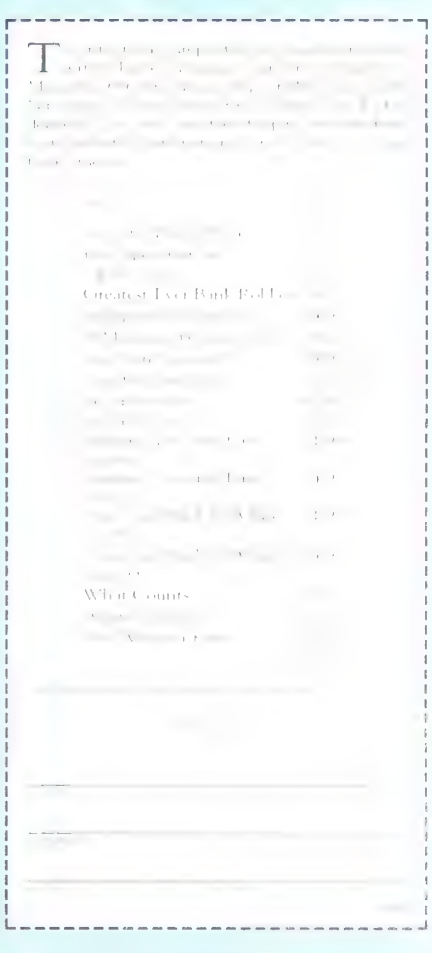
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drifted to the center in an effort to [illegible] organizations—Compassion in Dying, Oregon Right to Die, ERGO!—that [illegible] tion. The sanitizing of *HQ* was part of Hemlock's conservative repositioning. Larson's *HQ*s contained a great [illegible] of political coverage and not much how-to material. Kaffeeklatsching was kept to a minimum. Humphry's last issue contained fourteen letters; Larson's last issue contained one. Instead of sending an occasional personal note to *HQ*, readers were urged to send their legislators "hundreds and thousands" of "pro-active postcards," available at [illegible] from Hemlock, featuring the "Good Life/Good Death Logo in glossy eye-catching colors" on one side and plenty of room on the other for "specific messages advocating particular legislative concerns."

The golden age of M.B. and Mrs. E. was plainly over, but that didn't mean that the voices of Hemlock's members were entirely stilled. In a recent article about AIDS and assisted suicide, there were some memorable offerings from a new Hemlock breed, the HIV-positive men who now constitute a significant minority of the society's membership. One man who had facilitated a suicide commented, "I couldn't do it for just anybody. It would have to be someone I love. . . . After all, friends help friends, because doctors usually won't." He explained how he had helped:

> [illegible] He'd [illegible] about the [illegible] to get in and out of his apartment. I [illegible]

Their tastes in suicide methods may be different, but I like to think that when Mrs. E. read this—if she's still alive herself—she recognized a Good Samaritan and a kindred [illegible].

M[illegible] *Quarterly*s have been piling up for more than ten years, and as I reread them all they began to weigh heavily on me. Death, death, death! My file cabinets seemed like a charnel house stuffed with rattling bones. I decided that when I finished writing this article I'd throw every last memento mori into the trash.

But my father is eighty-nine. Three years ago he underwent surgery for colon cancer, and last year he lost his vision to retinal necrosis. My mother is seventy-seven. She has arthritis and glaucoma. I kept my back issues. I kept Derek Humphry's plastic-bag pamphlet too, in the same spirit as I have kept [illegible] though I have yet to use them—a yellowing collection of newspaper articles about how to refinish a wood[illegible] floor, how to plant a window box, how to hang a quilt, and how to set up a saltwater aquarium. You never know when they might come in handy. ■

April Index Sources

1 CNBC—Gallup poll (Fort Lee, N.J.); **2,3** Citizens for Tax Justice (Washington); **4** U.S. Internal Revenue Service; U.S. Government Printing Office; **6** U.S. General Services Administration (Fort Worth, Tex.); **7** CBS News—*New York Times* poll (N.Y.C.); **8** *Harper's* research. **9** Challenger, Gray & Christmas (Chicago); **10** German Embassy (Washington); **11** infas (Bonn); **12** Jerry F. Hough, Duke University (Durham, N.C.), Timothy Colton, Harvard University (Cambridge, Mass.), and Susan Goodrich Lehmann, Columbia University (N.Y.C.); **13** Israeli Consulate (N.Y.C.); **14** *The Rush Limbaugh Story: Talent on Loan from God*, by Paul D. Colford (St. Martin's Press, N.Y.C.); **15** Adam Sandler, *Variety* (Los Angeles)/*Harper's* research; **16,17** *Forbes* (N.Y.C.); **18** World Bank (Washington); **19** United Nations (N.Y.C.); **20** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (N.Y.C.)/*Harper's* research; **21,22** Earthquake Engineering Research Center (Richmond, Calif.)/Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (Oakland, Calif.); **23** Carol Taylor-West, University of Florida (Gainesville); **24** Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Dallas); **25** Behavior Analysts and Consultants (Stuart, Fla.); **26** Odyssey Group (Corona, Calif.); **27** *Harper's* research; **28** ProServ (Arlington, Va.); **29** Bass Tickets (Concord, Calif.); **30** Columbia Pictures Television (Hollywood); **31,32** Lawrence C. Soley, Marquette University (Milwaukee); **33** Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (Washington); **34,35** Defense Logistics Agency (Arlington, Va.); **36** U.S.D.A. Agricultural Research, Food Science Research Unit (Raleigh, N.C.); **37** McDonald's (Oak Brook, Ill.); **38** Jerich Promotions (N.Y.C.); **39** *Washington Post*/*Harper's* research.

TRUTH SERUM

On sodium pentothal, his secret comes out

By Bernard Cooper



Every Tuesday at exactly three o'clock, the nurse would call my name and lead me into the examining room, where I lay down on a padded table. "Comfortable?" she always asked, and always I said yes, without conviction. I have no recollection of the woman's face, only her white, immaculate back and the click of the door as it closed behind her. I'd be counting holes in the soundproof ceiling when Dr. Sward, my psychotherapist, would bound into the room. The man possessed an inexhaustible energy when it came to the task of psychological exploration, and I think he hoped some of his enthusiasm would rub off on his reticent clients. Dr. Sward prided himself on being a hale, contented fellow, a man able to overcome adversity. A former smoker, he'd had an operation to remove part of his larynx, and his voice, or what remained of it, was somnolent and gravelly. "Hello," he'd rasp. "Are we ready?" Dr. Sward took a seat in the room's only chair—vinyl exhaled under his weight—and removed a fountain pen and notepad from the breast pocket of his blazer. Pen poised, he beamed a broad and expectant grin, a lock of white hair falling onto his forehead.

Next would enter Dr. Townsley, Dr. Sward's stout, mustachioed colleague, who swabbed my arm with alcohol and asked me to make a fist. I barely felt the injection, but serum rode into my vein like an intravenous hot toddy, and a primal comfort seemed to radiate outward from the tip of the needle. Almost instantly, I began to take in rich, intoxicating breaths of air. I steeped in a heedless stew of sensation: felt the rubber released from my arm; heard small talk volleyed between the doctors; saw shiny fronds of a philodendron, which seemed like the greenest things on earth. With the sudden candor of a drunk, I wanted to tell the doctors how happy I felt, but before the words could form, I heard the sound of what I thought was a receptionist typing in another room. Her typing would quicken—faster, manic, superhuman—and invariably I would think to myself: A million words per minute! What nimble fingers! The keys must be shooting sparks from friction! And then I'd realize it wasn't the sound of typing after all, but something more miraculous—chattering waves of light showered down from a bulb on the ceiling. Stirred to the verge of tears, I wanted to shout, "Hold everything, Doctors. I can hear light!" But my jaw went lax and my fist unclenched and I lost my grip on consciousness.

When I opened my eyes, the overhead lights were out. Dr. Townsley had gone, and Dr. Sward's voice emanated from somewhere near the wan glow of a table lamp. "How are you?" he asked.

I was eager to answer any question. I effervesced with things to say. I couldn't have lifted my head if I'd wanted to. "Good," I mumbled, trying to work the moisture back into my mouth. "Very good."

Dr. Sward believed that this experimental form of therapy would help me get to the root of my problem. It was 1974, and his colleagues were having some success with the treatment, a combination of sodium pentothal, known during the Second World War as truth serum, and Ritalin, a mild amphetamine that when given to hyperactive children helps

Bernard Cooper is the author of Maps to Anywhere (Portland: Eighth Mountain Press, 1990) and the novel A Year of Rhymes (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, Publishers, 1992). His memoir, Truth Serum, appears in the August 1992 issue of Harper's Magazine.

A Demilitarized Palestinian State
Should Israel ... should the world rely on it?

... the current peace negotiations are agreed that the Palestinian state should be demilitarized. A demilitarized "West Bank" and Gaza would do away with any military threat to the state of Israel.

What are the facts?

... [illegible] ... unplacable ... [illegible] ... ties. With the exception of Israel, Iran, Moslem though not Arab, ranks in the background, its foremost military and political objective being the destruction of the state of Israel.

The PLO is a terror organization that ... [illegible] ... and to destroy the state of ... [illegible] ... has been most successful in the former. It seems almost incomprehensible that a group as supposedly levelheaded as the government of Israel would have entered into a "peace agreement" with such an organization. Not surprisingly, events since the famous "handshake" confirm such skepticism. The PLO has totally ignored ... [illegible] ... that it forswear the "covenant" that calls for the destruction of Israel. Arafat and his lieutenants continue to make blood-curdling speeches to the Arab public, in which they re-assert their old goal of destroying Israel in "stages".



A Palestinian state—demilitarized?

The myth of demilitarization. The assumption that "Palestine" would be demilitarized is not tenable. The Arab nations would not allow it, But mobilization of the "demilitarized" Palestine wouldn't really be required. The weapons of preference of Arab terrorists are the Soviet made Katyusha rockets, highly effective missiles, truck-mounted and swiftly mobile, ideal for hit-and-run raids against Israel. A look at the map makes clear that these rockets, short-range though they may be, would literally dominate the heartland of Israel. Easily moved and hidden along Israel's new eastern borders to be increased from about 40 miles to over 200 miles—they would rain destruction over most of Israel—covering in their entirety Israel's narrow waist that holds 70% of the Jewish population of the country, 80% of its industrial base, its only international airport, and its most important military installations.

The Arabs danced on the roofs of their houses when Iraqi Scud missiles fell on Tel Aviv during the Gulf War. Since the signing of the "peace agreement" they have continued in unrestrained terror and murder against the Jews—and against each other. Their hatred is undiminished and their avowed intention to destroy Israel has not been forsworn—in fact, it has repeatedly been re affirmed. Only incurable optimists can believe that an "autonomous" Palestine would wish to become a peaceful neighbor of Israel. If Israel ceded the Gaza Strip—the invasion route since before biblical times—and Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") to its sworn enemies it would make the country indefensible. Tanks, warplanes, and missiles would only be needed for the final mopping-up process. In the meantime, mortars and Katyushas located on the Judean ridges—Israel's proposed new borders—would suffice to neutralize life and industrial and military activity in Israel.

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them gather their scattered thoughts. The sodium pentothal, he'd explained, would cause me to pass out and the Ritalin would revive me. This paradoxical cocktail was supposed to numb a patient's inhibitions while at the same time enhancing his capacity for insight. Its effect vanished without a trace in about forty minutes. Dr. Sward suggested the drug after I told him that talking to him for the past six months had done nothing to reduce the frequency or intensity of my sexual fantasies involving men. "Frequency," "intensity"—those were the terms we used, although the clinical distance they imposed was in itself an achievement, a way of dividing me from the heat and draw of desire. The final decision was up to me; no treatment could make me change if I didn't have a strong desire to do so, but I might, he felt, be resistant, and the drugs could break down my unconscious defenses and hasten our progress.

"How are things at home?" asked Dr. Sward.

I'd been living with a woman for three years, a woman whom I loved and with whom I had a sex life both playful and pleasurable. I had met Bia at the California Institute of the Arts in 1970. Passing her dorm room I'd watch her cut bits of black-and-white photographs out of *Time* magazine with an X-Acto blade and then paste the fragments into long, hieroglyphic columns, giving current events a cryptic twist. In a circle of lamp light, she worked with the meticulous intensity of a jeweler, her concentration unaffected by the jazz blaring from her stereo. We began to eat dinner together at a local restaurant called The Happy Steak, and it was there, amid the faux cowhide upholstery and Formica wood-grain tables, that we honed our love of the lowbrow, discussing at length the soup cans and crushed cars of contemporary art. Budding conceptualists, we were indifferent to the *taste* of the steak but delighted by the *idea* that our dinners were impaled with a plastic cow, its flank branded RARE, MEDIUM, or WELL. Instead of saying grace before we ate, we'd bow our heads, clasp our hands, and recite "Cows are happy when they cry/S

e kick them in the eye."

I'm not sure at what point friend ship turned to love—our relation- ship remained platonic for nearly a ear—but I'm sure we would have ad sex much earlier if both of us adn't harbored longings for people f the same gender. My secret crush- s included Robert Conrad, whose elevision show, *The Wild, Wild West*, ad him stripped to the waist in al- most every episode, his pectorals a esson in advanced geometry, and Bill Medley of the Righteous Brothers, vith whom I'd been smitten since anior high, romanticizing into satyr- hood his long, lean, horsy face. Bia, turned out, was crazy for Greta Gar- o, piqued by her high cheekbones, aoist eyes, and world-weary manner hat suggested a womanhood rich in lamorous disappointments. We con- ided these guilty attractions late one night during a marathon conversa- ion. Once they were aired, our ad- missions seemed less shameful, less ignificant, and I began to feel that leeping with Bia was inevitable; who letter to sleep with than the keeper of your secrets? Besides, as a side ef- ect of our heated discussions, her ranslucent skin and hazel eyes had egun to excite me.

The only word to describe our first exual encounter is "premeditated." We gave ourselves weeks to get used to he idea of sleeping together, to weigh he consequences—would physical in- imacy jeopardize our friendship?—to rolong the delicious anticipation. Like couple catering a large party, we tried o take into account every eventuali- y, every shift in the weather, every whim of appetite. Hers was the bed we'd use: it was the biggest, the most amiliar; we'd sat on it for countless ours, smoking Marlboros, listening o jazz, watching TV with the sound urned down while improvising snap- y patter. Intercourse, we decided, would be best in the late afternoon, when the window shades turned Bia's oom the color of butter. Afterward we'd shower together and have a meal at The Happy Steak.

When the day we'd set aside finally arrived, we spent the morning walk- ng through Descanso Gardens. Arms about each other, we were tender and nervous and telepathic, taking this path instead of that, staring at schools of darting koi, lingering before stands of cactus, awed by their bright, incongruous blossoms.

I had slept with only one person up to that point, a girl with whom I'd gone to high school. Alison would whip her long blonde hair from side to side, a semaphore of the feminine. Her arms and legs were hard and tan, and she seemed, walking to class or sprawled on the lawn, all loose-limbed and eager, a living invitation. Alison loved sex. Got it as often and with as many boys as she could. Her flirtations had about them an ingenuous joy, a stark curiosity. The sexual revolution was in full swing, and Alison's hedo- nism gave her a certain cachet.

The night before I left for college on the East Coast, I took her to a bar on the top floor of a high-rise in Holly- wood. We shared fierce and slippery kisses in the elevator. As we toasted each other at a tiny table, the city glit- tered below us. Men looked at her with lust and at me with envy; her compa- ny quelled my sexual doubts. I knew we wouldn't sleep together that night—she had to drive back home to Malibu before her parents returned from a trip—and this knowledge freed me from the performance anxiety that surely would have swamped me had sex been imminent. I helped her off with her coat, toyed with her hair, and paid the bill, playing my masculine role to the hilt because I knew there was no pressure to follow through. I'd carry with me to college the memory of our date, a talisman to ward off the fear that I might never escape my de- sire for men.

Imagine my surprise when, two months later, Alison showed up at my Brooklyn dormitory wearing a skimpy white dress in the middle of winter, an overnight bag slung over her shoul- der. We hadn't seen or written to each other since our date. She'd been visit- ing her cousins on Long Island and wanted to surprise me. "You're hilari- ous," she said when I suggested she stay in the guest room at the end of the hallway. She flopped onto my bed. Kicked off her shoes. Fixed me in her bright green gaze. Flipped her hair to and fro like a flag.

We batted her overnight bag off the bed, and it skidded across the floor. Articles of clothing were [illegible] and I tried, with [illegible] to discern [illegible] when I entered her. It's now or never, I remember thinking. Her vagina was silky, warm, and capacious. It struck me that my [illegible] might [illegible] fill her in the way she wanted, and just when I thought that this tightening knot of self-consciousness might make the act impossible, she let out a yelp of unabashed pleasure. I plunged in deep- er, single-minded as a salmon swim- ming upstream. My hands swept the slope of Alison's shoulders, the rise of her breasts. I didn't realize it until af- terward, but I had sucked her neck the entire time, fastened by my lips to a bucking girl. Alison's climax was so protracted, her moans so operatic, her nails so sharp as they raked my back, that when she sat up and felt her neck I thought she was checking her pulse. Suddenly, she rose and ran to the bath- room, a swath of bed sheet trailing in her wake. "I told you," she shrieked, her voice resounding off the tile walls. She appeared in the doorway, legs in a wide, defiant stance, nipples erect. "I told you, no hickies!"

"No, you didn't."

"I said it right at the beginning."

"Then I didn't hear you, Alison."

She held her hand to her neck, Cleopatra bitten by an asp. "What am I going to do?" Her voice was about to break. "What am I going to tell my cousins?"

It was preposterous; she had come to Brooklyn to seduce me, and now Ali- son was mortified by the small, san- guine badge of our abandon. I said I was sorry.

"'Sorry' isn't going to take it away."

"What about this," I said, turning to show her the marks I could feel scored into my back.

"Oh, great," she said. "Let's com- pare war wounds." She bent down and scooped up her white dress; it lay on the floor like a monstrous corsage. "You men," she [illegible] butterly.

Forgive me, I was flattered. Placed at last in a class from which I'd felt barred.

I lit a cigarette, watching as she stood before the window and dragged a brush through her hair, the strokes punishing, relentless, and I began to see that Alison was angry at herself for

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limation's wild, excessive under-

California, where I met Bia.

Bia was still a virgin when we mad

took into account when I clipped my
toenails, conditioned my pubic hair
with cream rinse, and practically bap-
tized myself with Brut before I walked
into her room. My ablutions were not

smelling teamwork. Spent as we were
in the aftermath, we radiated fresh
contentment. I rested my head on Bia
breast, grateful for my good luck and
the buttery light. That afternoon w
began to live together: devotion,
knot we'd tied with our bodies.

As for our homosexual yearnings
once we became a couple, we didn
bring them up again out of affection
and deference: like the foundation o
a house, they remained present bu
unseen: the trust that prompted such
confidences was the basis of our rela
tionship. Both of us, I think, wanted t
believe that we were embarking on
the grand adventure of heterosexuali
ity, and that the fear of ostracism wit
which we had lived for so much of ou
lives could be shucked off at last lik
a pair of tight shoes. We were relieved
those first few years of living together
to see our love reflected back at u
from movies and billboards and books
Never taking for granted the privileg
of public touching, we kissed in car
and markets and parks. But there pe
sisted for me this unavoidable fact: re
gardless of how gratifying I found se
with Bia, I wanted to hav
man.

"K nock, knock. Is anybod
there?" joked Dr. Sward. "I was ask
ing what's new."

In the first few seconds of every ses
sion, consciousness was something
tried on for size like a huge droopy hat
Then I'd blurt a forbidden though

[illegible]

or. Usually, Dr. Sward greeted m
disclosures with a bromide. Once,
told him that every masturbatory fan
tasy I'd ever had involved a man, an
that I'd gotten to the point where

nkly didn't see how psychotherapy, matter how probing, enhanced by gs or not, could alter an impulse hed into my brain by a set of ume entering first. Dr. Seward laughed his arty laugh. I thought I heard him m forward in his chair. He suggest . I substitute the image of a woman r the image of a man the second be- re I ejaculated. I considered telling m that it I had to concentrate on s advice I'd never be able to come, it his casual tone made change seem easy, like using a grant vaudeville ok to yank an awful act off the stage. Despite the fact that his advice was ten taciturn, I continued to visit Dr. ward once a week. He was sincere in s efforts to change me; I was the ambivalent party, tired of grappling with cret lust yet riveted by the bodies of en. I blamed myself for the inability reform, chalking it up to a failure of ll, and would have tried just about ything that promised relief from nfusion and shame. Determined to ene my life with Bill—she was my al- mmert, there was no one with whom uld more fun—I thought it might worth enduring my frustrations with erapy in order to ensure the longevi- of our relationship. Perhaps there ould come a point when my sexual pulses would be simplified, straight ne where there once had been all the vists and turns of a trench curve. I new few gay men, and to some extent ill believed that homosexuals were oomed to a life of unhappiness; I never entirely exorcised the images of homosexuality that figured into the mors and hearsay of my childhood, ages of gloomy, clandestine encounters, with trench coats and candy the recurrent motifs. I suppose I understood that no behavioral modification, no psychological revelation, was ing to take away my desire for men. it in the end I went back to Dr. ward's office because—this is the ndest confession of all—because I anted to hear the light.

The terrible power of that sound. hen I tried to describe it to Bill, I re- rted to the phrase "The Music of the bheres." How lazy and inadequate! he universe seemed to be shuddering, ized by a vast, empathic spasm, crying out in a tremulous voice. I don't ean only visible stuff—chairs and

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cars and buildings and trees — but microcosmic tremblings too — pollen and protons and cosmic dust. The sum of matter was like a tuning fork that had been struck, and one vital, cacophonous chord issued from a lightbulb screwed into the ceiling of a room where I lay on a padded table and tried to revise my life. Compared to that sound, all the doctor's concern, all my apprehension, all the rules governing who touches whom were muffled to a feeble squeak. The glory of it left me breathless.

Now, I would never claim that the sound was a panacea, but it became an extremely beneficial aspect of therapy, given the way it trivialized my problems with its big aural blast. Dr. Sward believed that my desire for men could be broken down into a set of constituent griefs: lack of paternal love, envy toward other men for their sexual certainty, a need for identification confused with a drive for physical contact. And then, one day, the blare of the light still ringing in my ears, I asked the doctor if heterosexual desire wasn't also a muddled, complex matter, fraught with the very same helplessness and hurt he attributed to my particular case. Didn't he, for example, ever seek his wife's maternal attentions, or envy her sexual receptivity, or yearn to burrow into her flesh, his nerves alert and bordering on anguish? Without a dose of desperation, or the aches and pains left over from one's past, what would sex between two people be? A pat on the back?

All the things I believed to be true pushed from behind like a harried crowd; it was the sodium pentothal talking. The silence that followed embarrassed us both. Worried that my challenge to his authority had upset him, I backpedaled a bit. "I'm just thinking out loud, you know, trying to fit the pieces together."

"Of course," said Dr. Sward. "Of course. But after all, we're not here to talk about me."

I saw Dr. Sward for another six months before I announced, emboldened by an especially heady dose of serum, that I felt it was time for me to terminate therapy. He offered no argument for my staying. In fact, he was surprisingly willing to see me leave, and I couldn't help but think my visits had become for him a source of professional, if not personal, disappointment. For the past year Dr. Sward had insisted that, since I lived with a woman and enjoyed with her a passionate sex life, I was, ipso facto, heterosexual. During our final sessions, however, Dr. Sward seemed resigned to my conflict, more respectful of the obstinate, wayward power of human want.

"Would you say," he asked rather pensively at the end of our final session, "that the nature of your homosexual fantasies has changed at all during the course of our working together?"

"They've changed a little," I said, to placate him. I meant that they occurred with even greater frequency.

"Will you attempt a hetero- or a homosexual life after you leave this office?"

"Don't know," I lied, sliding off the table and shaking his hand. We sighed and wished each other luck.

What I did know was that, as far as the outcome of sodium pentathol therapy was concerned, the one truth that mattered to me now was the electrifying strength of lust. Still, I made no effort to leave Bia for months after I quit seeing Dr. Sward. I was frightened of uncertainty, of exile to a shapeless fate, and the closer I came to a life without her, the more her company soothed me.

When I finally did tell her I wanted to move out and test my feelings for men, we were sitting side by side at Kennedy Airport, waiting to board a plane back to Los Angeles after a vacation in New York City. Destinations echoed over the loudspeaker. Travelers checked their boarding passes, gathered at gates. All that rush and flux, all those strangers embarking on journeys, made urgent and keen my sense of departure. I turned to Bia and, before I knew what I was doing, mumbled that there was something I had to say. I kept protesting my affection, my helplessness. I wanted desperately to take her hand, to hold her to me, but fought it as a hypocritical impulse. She stared at me, uncomprehending, as though I were pleading in a foreign language. Then the dawning of fury and hurt as she understood.

Once we were on the plane, our steady, defeated weeping was disguised

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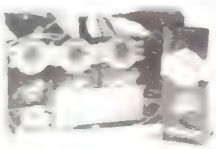
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congregated on the sidewalk or shared tables at outdoor cafés, their sleeves rolled up, shirts unbuttoned, talk and

thought I was gay, and I regretted wear-

the rain. My shirt was drenched in s- onds; patches of my bare skin seep through the fabric like stains. I ke tugging the cloth away from my bo but the wet shirt clung and fle bloomed through. Dressed yet expo in the middle of the city, arms fold across my chest, I froze as though an anxious dream. Then I dashed in the nearest doorway, where anoth man stood, waiting out the rain. had a round, guileless face and bro hair beaded with drops of water. "You positively soaked," he said. We e each other nervously, then peered up especially handsome nor especially teresting, but his small talk—he kn where I could buy an umbrella, hop he had closed his apartment window calmed me. His weathered neck, circled by a gold chain, made wonder how old he was and whether spent long hours in the sun on a b conv somewhere in the city, w friends perhaps, or the man with wh he lived, and I glimpsed, as if throu the window of his skin, a life more id and settled than my own. He w decided, a man who'd adapted to own desires; I envied him his sex certainty, and thus bore out, altho in reverse, one of Dr. Sward's theor I would have had sex with t talkative, innocuous stranger in an stant, would have gladly given him burden of releasing me from ambi lence. And just when it occurre me that it might be possible to sed him, just as I wrestled with a prop tion, the rain let up, he wished luck, and he dashed down the stre

I walked aimlessly, for hours, till pale sun made my shirt opaque.

That night, when Bia reached ou her sleep to touch me, she touche man on the edge of action, shed the skin of his former life. I tossed turned. The hotel bed felt hard unfamiliar. I didn't know then that and I would remain lifelong friend that by never again falling in love someone of the opposite sex we'd serve the anomaly of who we o were. I knew only that impatience weighed my remorse. Over and ov replayed my encounter with the ma the doorway; in fantasy I lived on own, and when he asked me if I h place, I told him yes, I had a place

LETTERS

Continued from page 15

and not performed essentially the same exercise (and still more painstakingly) before.

So "Ad Infinitum" left me wondering: Is the literature of exhaustion a contagious disease as well as a contemporary trend?

Peter G. Earle
Drexel Hill, Pa.

Eating to Live

The recipe for a high-calorie sandwich of three strips of bacon, two eggs, and three dollops of mayonnaise ("Overeat to Live," Readings, December 1993], which was offered as an antidote to life-threatening HIV-related weight loss, must have supplied some of your readers with a few laughs. The struggle that I and others with AIDS must wage daily in order to avert weight loss *is*, however, one of the most prevalent and underreported causes of mortality in people with AIDS. For those who cannot maintain critical body mass, this silly-sounding sandwich could literally mean the difference between life and death. As such, it should have been beyond ridicule.

Todd R. Kelly
Philadelphia

Correction

Due to a mathematical error in the February 1994 Harper's Index, the percentage change in the value of Euro Disney stock since the park opened in 1992 was incorrect; the correct percentage is –76.

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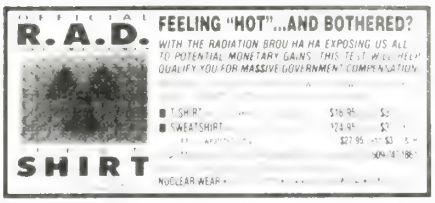
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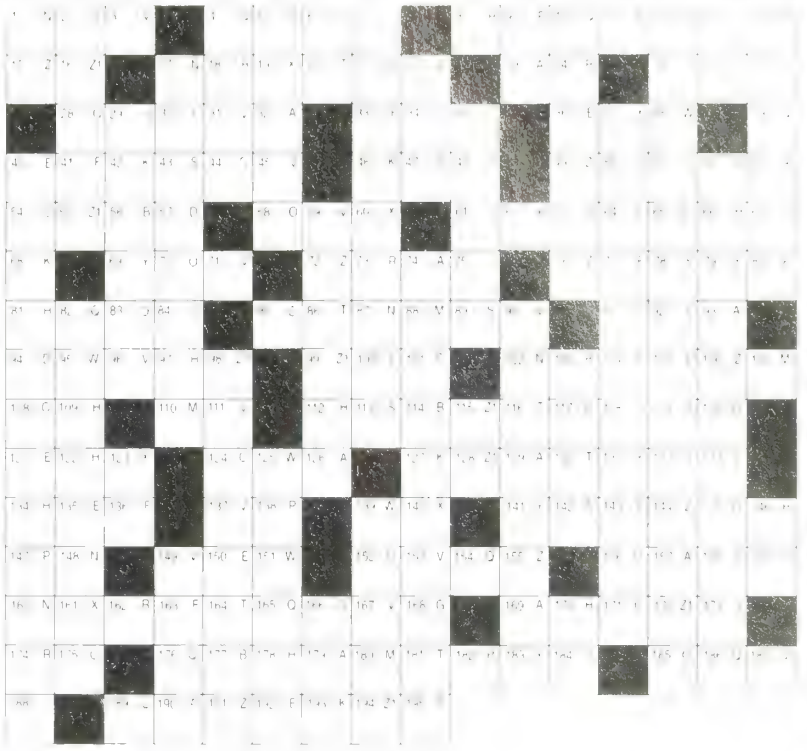
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by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 87.



WORDS

A. Volunteer cavalry regiment in the Spanish-American War (2 wds.) 129 139 55 190 157 169 25 37 93 126 74

B. Instrument; channel 103 56 177 114 24

C. Glass also called an inhaler 171 175 117 124 85 101 65

D. Trap, snare 12 44 94 23 57

E. Atrociousness 135 36 150 9 121 62 192 40

F. County S. of Moray Firth, N.E. Scotland 41 33 163 77 136

G. Caresses clumsily 52 91 28 168

H. Drug used as an upper 66 51 112 26 170 109 97 134 81 178 122

I. Eng. antarctic explorer (1868–1912) 188 118 29 75 25

J. Vapid, flat, insipid 173 7 61 84 184

K. Sound, whole, complete 193 46 80 42 127 68

L. Band; part of a theater 159 30 64 100 189 133 105 92 143

M. Standard, average 88 110 180 107

N. Illiberal; austere 148 17 160 87 102 1

O. Cannibal 169 55 54 2 34 5 108 47 155 70 83 21 145

P. Life-giving drink of the gods, in mythology 187 158 11 147 119 118

Q. Deny interest in or connection with 39 165 154 82 1 13 6 4

R. One of Dumas's musketeers 3 73 [illegible] 162 [illegible] 4 146

S. Search actively 115 152 195 43 78 [illegible] 117

T. Bristly, prickly [illegible] 164 [illegible] 131 20 [illegible] 130 27

U. Beam used to support floor, ceiling, etc 177 [illegible] 13 6 [illegible]

V. Timid, ill at ease (3 wds.) 32 167 45 [illegible] 43 96 53 149

W. Treat; adulterate [illegible] 137 [illegible] 3 [illegible] 90 71 [illegible] 147 95 [illegible] 14 [illegible] 139 171

X. Effective, operative (2 wds.) 19 [illegible] 4 37 60 79 161

Y. Small, portable filing cabinet 183 141 151 67 69

Z. In spiritualism, the emanation from the body of a medium 106 49 155 131 76 44 1

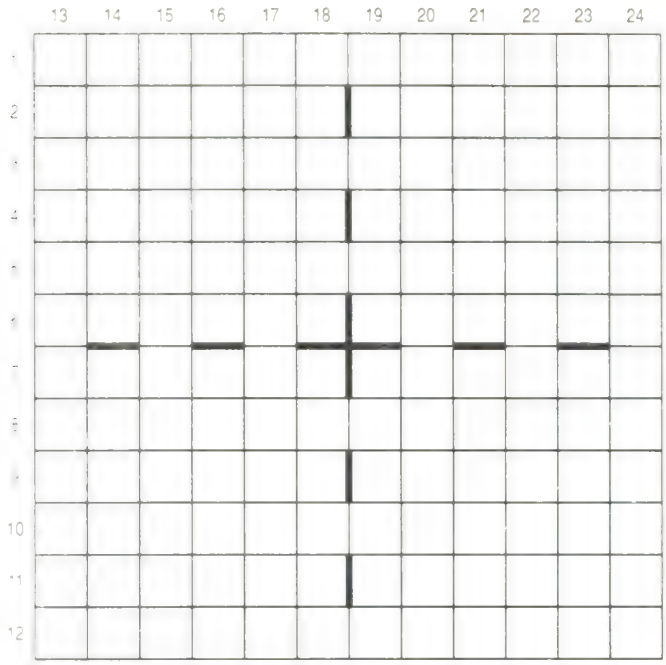
Z1. Hastens; sinks (a vessel) deliberately 194 115 125 [illegible] 22 16 [illegible] 45 [illegible] 28

PUZZLE

Vacancy

Each shaded square holds an unchecked [illegible] that belongs to the ACROSS entry, the crossing DOWN entry simply skips that square . . . and vice versa. Half of the rows and columns contain two entries; these are clued together, [illegible]

Clue answers include one proper name and a brushism at 4. The solution to last month's puz[illegible] page 87



Across

1. Conservative Perot, embracing the use of force, is this [illegible]
3. Bad spell of weather aids restaurant workers (11)
4. A grand orgy cut short over irritating behavior of the [illegible]
   Hero of several movie sequels back, hurt box office (5)
5. The police, surreptitiously surrounding front of Nissan, concerned with the horn? (10)
6. Loud ruffian losing head completely (5)
   Unfortunately, Gore with frequency becomes an [illegible]
7. [illegible] unable finally (possibly can't) to pass Bill (5)
8. Indecision confounds any ethics (9)
   [illegible] uncertain to yield a little weight (5)
12. Disturbed at her otter, he preceded me (10)

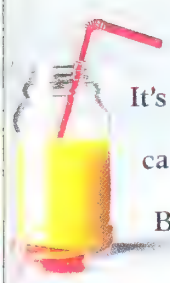
Down

13. Takes a deduction and leaves in a hurry? (10, *two words*)
14. Holding copyright, tore off the first page (5)
    One who's boorish about cast (5)
15. Regulate no maneuvers—is that better in the war? (10)
16. Theatrical coach (5)
    Go along with irregular cadence, losing number (6)
17. Engineer ends rules about loss leader, starts a price war (10)
18. Poker winnings turned over: small checks (5)
    Doesn't leave a tip after beginning quarrels (5)
19. Dock Workers' head has shortened river force (5)
    Raise Byzantine palace for the sultan (5)
20. Sail back to outer island with excellent [illegible]
21. *Laughing Cavalier* in art . . . (5)
    . . . school in England, one hears, is stomached? (5)
22. [illegible]
23. Thrilled about Catholic, in a sense (5)
    Danger is a beautiful girl beginning to love (5)
24. Hetty notices about Republican. Where's the beef? (10)

[illegible] Vernon, New York; Sue Sandeen, Gainesville, Florida; and Rico Dortman, Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.



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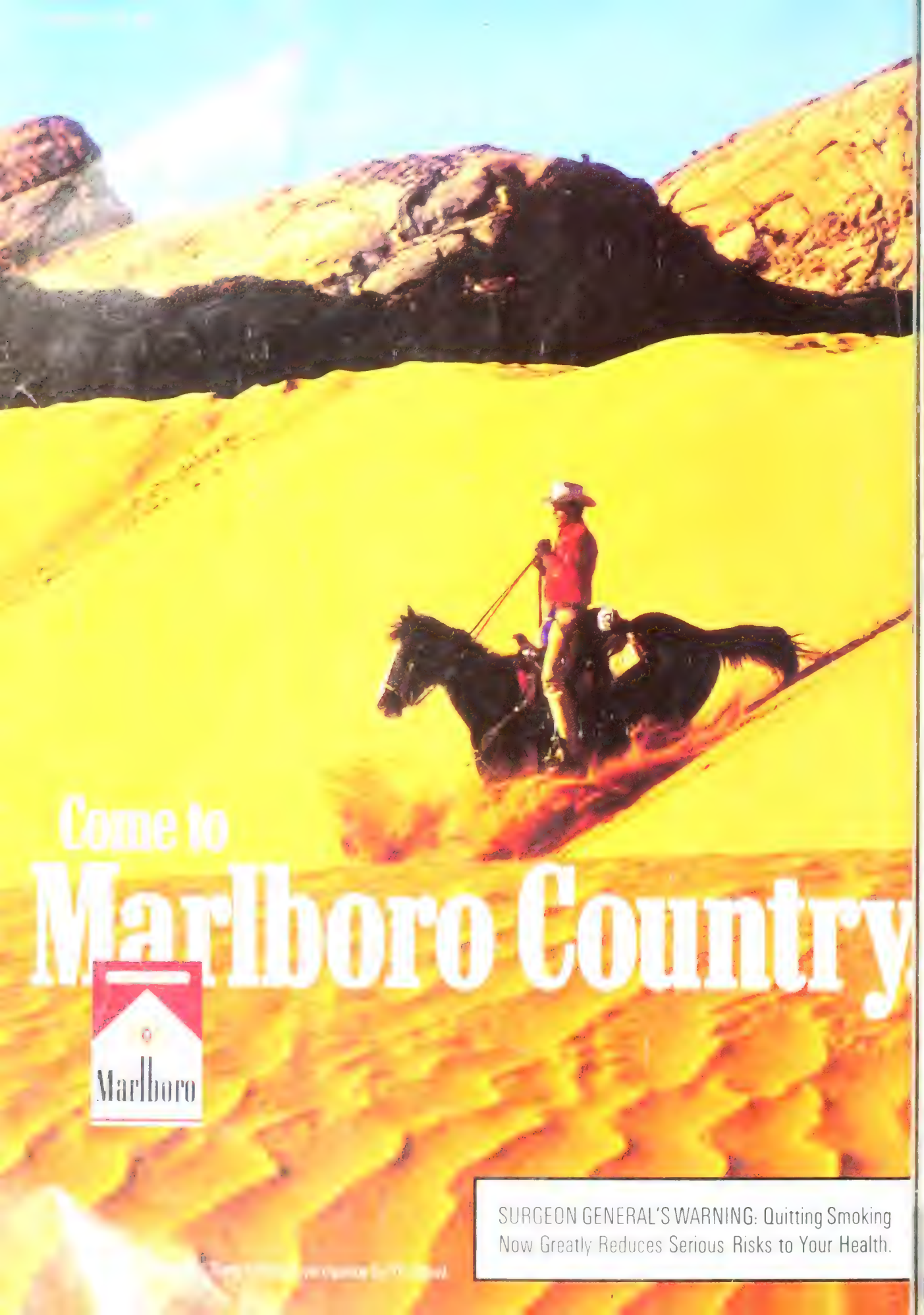
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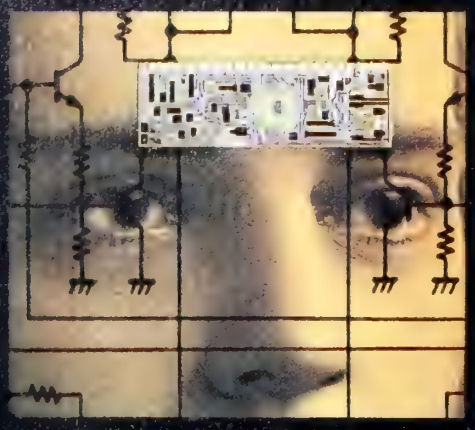
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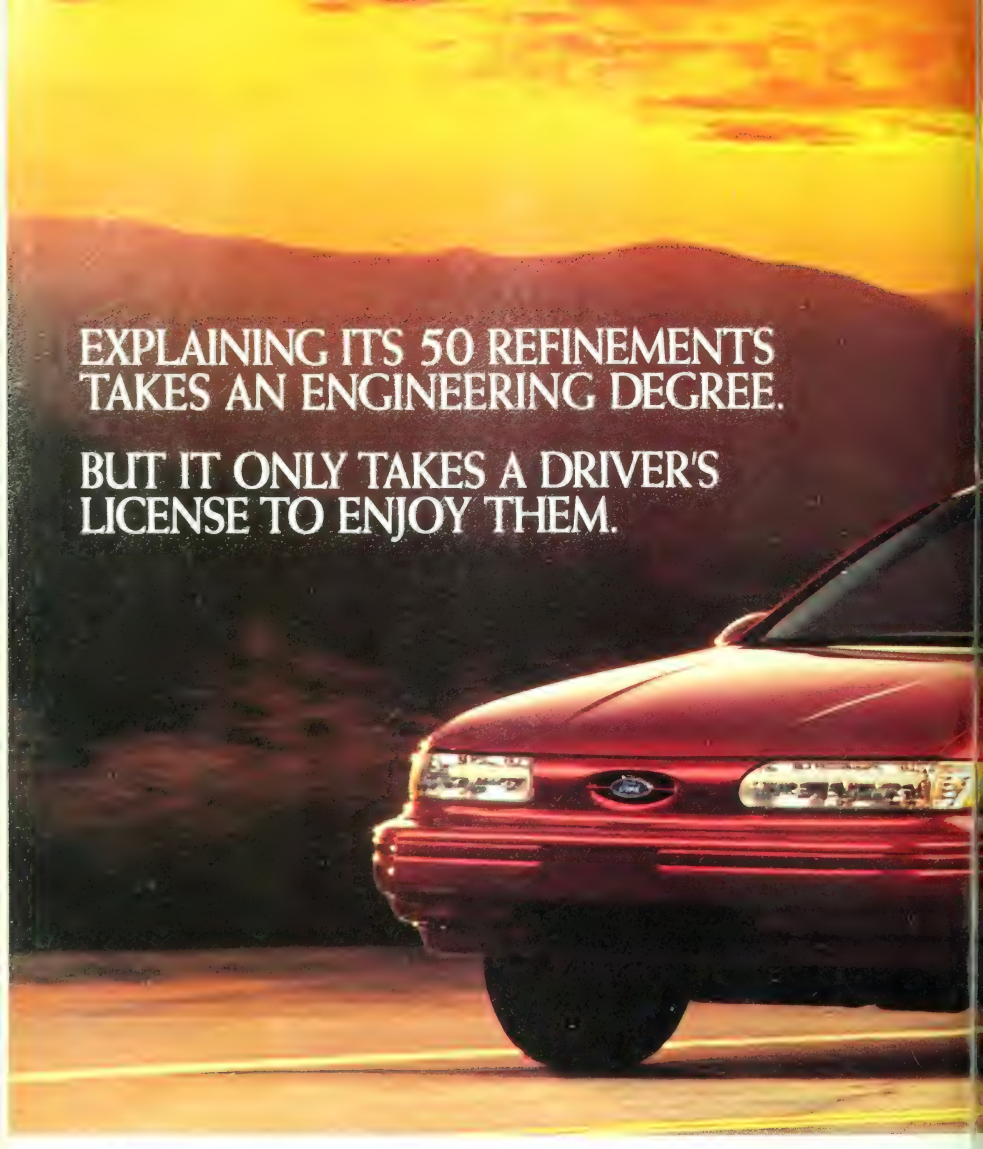
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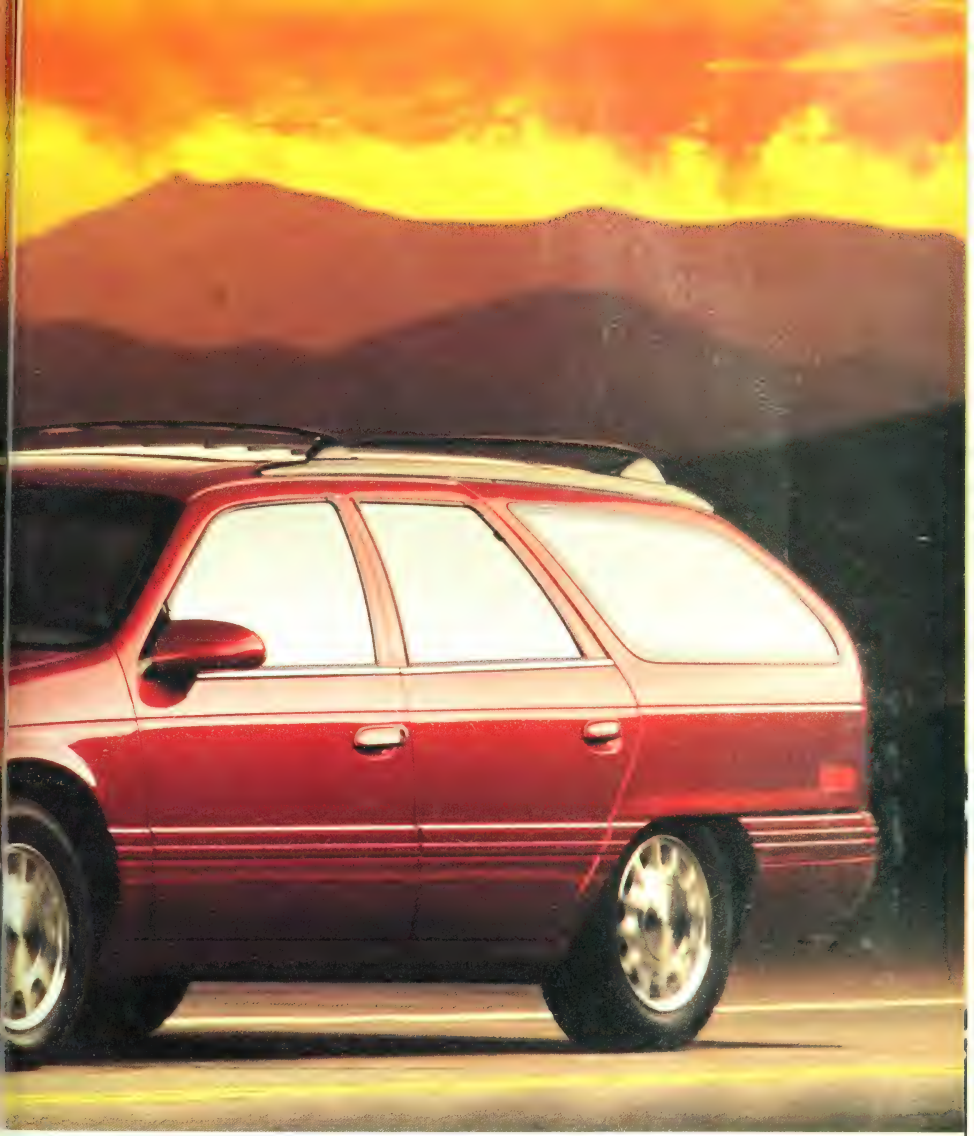
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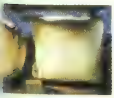


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LETTERS

Northern Ireland: A War of Patriots or Gangsters?

It is not surprising, as Scott Anderson reports ["Making a Killing: The High Cost of Peace in Northern Ireland," February], that the "armed struggle" in Northern Ireland has branched out into extortion, rackets, and drugs. Or that there is collusion between the IRA and Protestant paramilitaries: to finance their political causes, these groups have little recourse except to exploit those most at risk in their own communities. The sad fact remains that rather than ridding Northern Ireland of gangland activities, government measures to isolate the terrorists have unwittingly helped to undermine the social fabric of sections of Belfast and other hard-pressed areas of North-

It would be a mistake, however, to believe that this conflict persists simply because of a real or a perceived economic advantage on the part of some of its participants. The fundamental question dividing Northern Ireland is neither economic nor religious. It is constitutional: should Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom or be joined with the Republic of Ireland? This issue has little to do with organized crime, and thus cannot be the profit out of political violence. The deplorable situation that Anderson describes needs sides. Moreover, the high cost of peace ed in political gains and losses by group pursuing very different constitutiona objectives. Thus, terrorists—and the criminal backers—shun offers to par ticipate in negotiations not because o the adverse financial consequences bu because the likely outcome would re quire major concessions in their polit ical aims.

William A. Hazleton
Oxford, Ohio

As a native of Belfast, I found Scot Anderson's alleged report on North ern Ireland a lapse in taste, full of re hashed notions and threadbare clichés with the Falls Road, I can assure you readers that it is not known as "Mur der Mile" by anyone in Ireland. Thi coinage is an invention of the British yellow tabloid press.

A further example of Anderson careless way with words is his use scribe the 1969–71 pogrom against th nalist population (conducted b the Northern Ireland state forces: th Royal Ulster Constabulary, the police largest forced movement of civilian in postwar Europe prior to Bosnia– was the division of West Belfast int from one another by the British "peac line," thus reproducing the partitio of Ireland on an urban scale.

Anderson's claim that "tribal maps ire pasted to the soldiers' gun stocks even more laughable. Since Britis Army foot patrols never move fro one zone to another, these maps ar unnecessary. It is simply impossible fo British soldiers to "stray" from one zon to another; indeed, it is well know

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I'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE
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"Lady, Be Good!"

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"Sunday In The Park With George"

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on a regular basis in concocted TV exposés ("The Cook Report") and calculated leaks by the usual unidentified [illegible] intelligence sources" to tabloid "security correspondents." The problem for C13 is not, as Anderson would have your readers believe, an epidemic of intimidation but the unit's inability, despite the most draconian legislation in Europe, to produce a shred of evidence to substantiate the allegations of IRA racketeering.

It is a shame that a publication of the stature of *Harper's* should publish this confection of lazy clichés and unfounded rumors. A more carefully considered piece might have assisted your readers to a better understanding of the situation in Ireland.

Michael Quigley
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Scott Anderson replies:

I strongly agree with William Hazleton that a mere crackdown on gangsterism will not solve "The Troubles" of Northern Ireland. But I find his suggestion that this gangsterism does not pose any serious obstacle to peace remarkably naive. Whenever a society is torn apart by war—especially a protracted civil war—there are those who turn the situation to their financial advantage, and who then have a compelling interest in maintaining the chaos. For examples of this, one need look no further than the Somali clansmen who became wealthy by controlling the distribution of emergency relief supplies to their starving countrymen in 1992, or the Bosnian Serb militia commanders who have recently amassed fortunes on the black-market flow of goods into Sarajevo and other Muslim-held enclaves. For a Northern Ireland example, there is the case of the late Jimmy Craig, a West Belfast gangster who rose to prominence in the Ulster Defense Association (UDA) and who used the mantle of Protestant patriot to murder his business rivals and operate a protection syndicate that embraced more than seventy Belfast companies. Were any of these men primarily motivated by "political aims" and simply working a sideline until their "constitutional objectives" were addressed?

I also question the certainty—perhaps more importantly, the usefulness—with which Hazleton labels Northern Ireland a primarily constitutional conflict. Political science professors can argue forever about the root cause of any war, but in my experience this intellectual exercise has little application on the ground. Having spent time with guerrillas and soldiers in a half-dozen war zones around the world, I've come to the rather depressing conclusion that most young men don't pick up assault rifles or throw bombs out of any passionately held belief or political awareness but simply because it is more exciting than working the family rice paddy or sitting at home to watch reruns of *Coronation Street*.

Michael Quigley faults me for my "careless way with words," but it seems most of his difficulties can be attributed to his careless way with reading, aggravated by his adversarial approach to logic. It's simply difficult to diagnose a pattern to his complaints.

First, I never suggested that local residents routinely referred to the lower Falls Road as "Murder Mile." And even if, as Quigley claims, this nickname was the invention of "the British yellow tabloid press," what of it? It is still its nickname, and—whether appreciated or not—one with which all residents of Belfast are familiar.

Second, for some reason known only to him, Quigley takes great offense at my use of the term "ethnic cleansing," but then goes on to describe "the division of West Belfast into clearly demarcated zones," zones—I think he would agree—that were based on the religious/ethnic origins of its residents. If that is not a form of ethnic cleansing, what is?

On the matter of tribal maps, does Quigley find them "laughable" because he believes I made them up, or is it their existence he finds humorous? Who knows? And contrary to Quigley's assertions, army foot patrols do move from one zone to another and they do occasionally stray (as in the case of two British corporals who accidentally drove into an IRA funeral procession on the Falls Road in 1988 and were murdered). And although it is true that the army conducts fewer patrols in loyalist neighborhoods, I think there exists a rather more substantive reason for the loyalist label.

On the issue of the British propaganda campaign to "criminalize" the conflict, Quigley finally makes a valid point—and one that I address in the article. It is certainly in the British government's interest to portray the paramilitaries as self-serving gangsters, and I've no doubt that many of the "underworld" stories that appear in pro-British Belfast newspapers (offering nothing in the way of proof and almost always citing, as Quigley points out, an unidentified "intelligence source") are planted by British disinformation officers. These avenues, however, were not my sources of information. As I think even Quigley would acknowledge, the vast majority of my report is based on firsthand experience and from interviews with men directly involved in or affected by the Belfast underworld. Or perhaps he thinks that these too are fabrications, or that the men who risked their lives to talk with me were simply British agent provocateurs?

For all his bristling denunciations, Quigley is not engaged in serious debate. Instead, he has merely assumed a posture of denial—closing his eyes, covering his ears, and screaming—in hopes of shutting out the sights and sounds that threaten his worldview.

The Roots of Nationalism

In "A Cosmopolitan Among the True Believers" [Readings, March], a commentary on the rise of national and ethnic strife around the world, Michael Ignatieff states that "nationalism is most violent where the group you are defining yourself against most closely resembles you." He provides examples such as "Ulstermen" and "Irishmen," Serbs and Croats, and might just as easily have included Palestinian Arabs and Israelis, and the various peoples of India and Pakistan, who are often physically and even linguistically indistinguishable. This, Ignatieff maintains, is the Cain and Abel story: hatred between brothers even more ferocious than hatred between strangers.

Yet Ignatieff ignores a primary cause of protracted group conflict: the deep-seated differences over value systems manifested in what we call religion. As his own examples demonstrate, these value systems clearly take on much more significance than shared genetic traits or a common language. On the other hand, in situations where peoples of similar culture and ethnicity are not divided by deep religiously based differences, neighborly relations—even secessions—have posed little problem to the involved groups: Lutheran Norwegians obtained independence quite peacefully from Lutheran Sweden in 1905, and the Catholic Czechs and Slovaks have, more recently, also gone their separate ways. A Canadian such as Ignatieff might also have remembered that Americans and English Canadians, both citizens of pluralistic states of Protestant Anglo-Celtic origin, whom most people in the world would have trouble telling apart, do not seem on the verge of collective fratricide.

Henry Srebrnik
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada

A Case for Composting

Patricia Poore bases her essay "America's 'Garbage Crisis': A Toxic Myth" [Readings, March] on the assumption that because the environmental movement is so focused on recycling it neglects issues such as air quality, water pollution, energy management, toxic-waste monitoring, etc. This is blatantly untrue. Organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, Greenpeace, Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, Environmental Defense Fund, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Association, and many others would surely take issue with such a premise.

Moreover, Poore overlooks the subject of minimizing waste—perhaps the single most important issue in this area. Yet the numbers are staggering: the per-capita rate of waste generation, now at 3.5 pounds per day, is projected to reach 4 pounds by the year 2000. Poore also omits composting as an element of recycling. She seems to think of recycling as being limited to aluminum, glass, and plastic. In fact, these make up only a small portion of our solid waste. She ignores the fact that 41 percent of the waste stream is paper, 15 percent yard waste (leaves, grass clippings, and brush), and 8 percent food waste—a total of 64 percent that is compostable.

Although she states that "incineration remains a reasonable and safe option," Poore does not even mention the high cost of building incinerators or the potential threat of ash they produce (the ash is classified as hazardous waste and must be disposed of as such), or of the difficulty of controlling stack emissions and their effect on air quality. The most crucial omission is her failure to mention that this 67 percent of the waste stream can be diverted from the landfill and the incinerator and, through composting, be made into a useful product: topsoil. At a time when the topsoil of our nation's fields and pastures is becoming thinner and thinner, it is almost criminal to bury or burn the organic material that constitutes more than two-thirds of our garbage.

Evidence of Poore's infatuation with landfills appears in such statements as "the reality is that there is—and always will be—plenty of room in this country for safe landfills." But in whose backyard? How far from the source of waste generation? And at what cost? And there is further proof of her blind passion: "newer landfills are double-lined, piped, vented, leachate tested, and eventually capped. These new standards have made current American waste management safer by far than ever before." Yet no double liner is guaranteed against leakage, and it is unlikely that a capped and closed landfill will be monitored for an indefinite period of time. After that, no one worries about a breached cap, a leaking liner, or the effect on groundwater.

"Do we need recycling to save resources? No, not in the real world," writes Poore. She uses paper as an example of a material derived from a renewable resource—the tree farm. She does not recognize the fact that as we replace natural and diverse ecosystems with the sterile monoculture of the tree farm, species that were dependent on those ecosystems become endangered.

Although Poore is identified as the founder, editor, and publisher of the magazine *Garbage*, this same word describes her article perfectly.

Brittain Pendergast
Atlanta, Ga.

NOTEBOOK

Answering the call

By Lewis H. Lapham

Anyone who follows the political discussions on C-Span or *Larry King Live* pre-

that the country suffers from a disas-

uncertainty and misfortune. For the last four or five years the phrase has been making the rounds of the prominent editorial pages and the public-

cal steaming in the world, and it not by

the course of the luncheon address

We can photograph the moons of Jupiter and sell the joys of capitalism to the Communist Chinese, but we can't balance the feder-

the streets of East St. Louis, and do you know why? For the same reason that the country—or the university, or the network,

is being governed by self-serving and incompetent fools. Because the leadership has gone out of our lives.

The phrase always makes a favorable impression, and I've noticed that

something effect not unlike the sound of waterfalls or the distant chanting of monks, but lately I've begun to suspect that President Bill Clinton is the only man in America who thinks that it means something. He talks incessantly about leadership—its inestimable value and illustrious place in the history of nations—and when he addresses a joint session of Congress or a press conference in Detroit, he is forever sounding the trumpet or answering the call, constantly urging his fellow citizens forward against the enemies of progress arrayed like so many dark horsemen on the far shore of the Potomac, under the glittering banners of ignorance, superstition, cynicism, and greed. Certainly he means to play the part of a heroic president—a leader, by God, like John F. Kennedy

makes an eloquent and heartfelt speech, nobody ever follows him out the door, or over the top, or into no-man's-land, or anywhere at all.

The result is comic because Clinton never seems to notice the absence of recruits. By presenting himself as an advertisement for leadership, he remains as reliably inert as a photograph meant to sell basketball sneakers or men's cologne, threatening nobody's interest and always glad to say something else at the next day's press conference. Does the economy languish? Yes, say the polls, and Clinton promises vigorous measures. Will Congress accept those vigorous measures? No, say the polls, and Clinton declares the economy cured of its sickness. Do the American people want better health care? Yes, say the polls, and Clinton announces a plan. Will the American people pay for the remedy? No, say the polls, and Clinton offers to rewrite the prescription. Is the war in Bosnia a crime against humanity? Yes, say the polls, and Clinton puts the Marines on ready alert. Can an American military expedition bring peace to the Balkans? No, say the generals at the Pentagon, and Clinton orders the Marines to stand down.

I don't doubt that the President means well, but the humor of his administration testifies to his too literal-minded attendance at too many conferences sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the Kennedy School of Government. The thought again occurred to me in early March at a symposium assembled in the grand ballroom of a New York City hotel to consider the question of foreign trade. It was the kind of conference that Clinton undoubtedly would have enjoyed—lots of important people busily taking important notes; lots of worrying about what was to become of the great, good American people (var-

ously compared to a herd of alarmed ffalo or a colony of despondent nts); lots of solemn warnings. Over a an of five hours I counted twenty-six ferences to leadership lost, but by e end of the afternoon I had come o closer to an understanding of what was that the country so sadly lacked. lone of the speakers raised the corol- ry question of elitism—i.e., if leadership is good, why is elitism bad?—and neither did anybody express rprise or alarm at President Clinon's floundering in the shoals of the Whitewater affair.

The oracles on loan from the Brookgs Institution and the American Enerprise Institute chose instead to speak f imaginary beings. Some of them apparently hoped for the arrival of an miable despot, a smiling, uniformed gure who inspired the unswerving yalty of the bond market and the ews media. Others seemed to be decribing a benevolent American plucr it who could afford to ignore the rifles of mere self-interest and who xpressed, both in his life and his person, the ideal of government as philanthropy. A few of the more literary espondents offered martial or sporting nalogies, and when searching for exmplary proofs of leadership they menioned military commanders, high chool football coaches, and veteran olice captains accustomed to administering precincts known for both the avagery of their inhabitants and the rat-like cunning of their elected magistrates.

As the speakers succeeded one nother at the podium, adjusting the nicrophone and arranging their notes, found myself hard-pressed to take seiously their fretting about leadership, ossibly because I associate the word vith the making of a moral rather han an athletic or managerial effort—vith traits of character, not with a talent for leveraging a stock portfolio or tealing third base. Leadership is a trength not easily come by, and it declares itself in the practice of telling he truth. I think of a leader as a person who demands something difficult rom other people, who imposes, on himself as well as his followers, the burdens of conscience and self-restraint. The impositions seriously interfere with everybody's habitual pleasures and hypocrisies, and who in America at the moment would welcome such an individual to the annual board meeting, much less to the stage of the national political theater? Let the leader who was lost and then found begin to talk about sacrifices slightly more difficult than giving up cigarettes or the third whiskey before dinner, and he puts an abrupt and indignant end to the pious wish for his happy return. When Christ showed up in Jerusalem saying the kinds of things that leaders have an awkward habit of saying, the Romans quickly discouraged what seemed to them an overly zealous display of leadership.

I can imagine a leader cast as a parish priest or a personal trainer, even as a professor of seventeenth-century English prose, but not as a salesman or a politician. I look at President Clinton and think of a Mexican piñata—a plump but remarkably durable figure swinging back and forth in the wind of the news, bearing up under the blows of blindfolded lobbyists and delighted television correspondents, spilling forth the gifts of government in the form of defense contracts, smiles, hugs, farm subsidies, campaign promises, Fourth of July oratory, and little, sweet-scented twists of backstairs gossip.

Given the premises of egalitarian democracy, I don't know how anybody (the twenty-six speakers in the grand ballroom, Rush Limbaugh, or the editorial board of *The Wall Street Journal*) could expect a more high-minded result. Leadership that depends on something other than a talent for brokering the markets in special interest implies an aristocratic principle of government, which in turn implies the authority of an elite, which is, by current definition, impermissible. In the American conversation, even the word "elitist" serves as an insult—not quite as contemptuous as racist or sexist, but certainly as a synonym for social pretension and intellectual fraud.

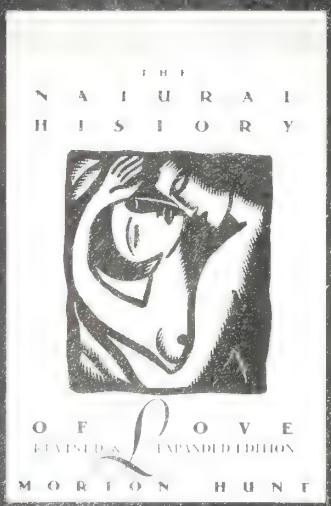
Although nearly all Americans honor what they can perceive as honest achievement and willingly grant the prerogatives of authority to those elites who found their claims on the exhibition of skill or knowledge so

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categories of a profession (a divorce lawyer, say, or a right end, or a cosmetic surgeon), they refuse to grant the patents of authority in the realm of political wisdom or virtue. Who can prove that the fine phrases consist of anything other than pompous sham? Every citizen sets himself up as [illegible] somewhere in the back of the auditorium somebody raises the familiar American objection, "Oh yeah? Says who?"

The questions haven't brooked a satisfactory answer since the War of 1812, and if any of our modern grandees think that the lack of leadership is something new under the sun, they might take the trouble to study Gordon S. Wood's *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. The book appeared two years ago, and when I'd finished reading it I vowed never again to bemoan the absence of leaders likely to fit the editorial specifications of *Time* magazine and who therefore could be counted upon to resemble the heroes of ancient Greece, available for photographs, with bronze swords and silver shields, in a Minnesota shopping mall.

Situating his argument in the years 1770–1820, Wood describes the transformation of the American political principle from something resembling the old Roman ideal of a republic—which was what both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson had in mind—into a commercial democracy shaped by the energy of money, which was more nearly akin to what Andrew Jackson had in mind. The authors of the Constitution assumed that their new government would be conducted by wealthy and disinterested gentlemen who had neither occupation nor [illegible] mercantile interests to promote, "men, who," in Madison's words,

[illegible]

most virtue to pursue the common

[illegible] wilderness

press, the excitements of the revolution fostered vehement antagonisms against the British nobility—against its "certain Airs of Wisdom and Superiority," against its "Scorn and Contempt and turning up of the Nose," and after the war was won, a good deal of this same feeling settled upon the American gentry who had thought to govern the country for "the Honour and Pleasure of doing good." Just as republicanism (which asked of its citizens a high degree of moral effort and civic virtue) subverted the pretensions of monarchy, so democracy (which asks little of its citizens except the expressions of will and appetite) subverted the pretensions of republicanism. By 1801, in a speech to the townspeople of Wallingford, Connecticut, Abraham Bishop, a New Haven lawyer and a Jeffersonian republican, was busily castigating the wealthy and well-educated citizens of the state as "the deceiving few . . . well fed, well dressed, chariot rolling, caucus keeping, levee reveling federalists." Of the government newly arrived in Washington, which already was squandering on itself the luxurious sum of $42,000 a day, Bishop expressed nothing but loathing and contempt, and he cautioned his audience against the vainglorious wars declared by the heroic gentry but paid for, in blood and money, by "plain men like yourselves." Of great naval victories, he said:

> . . . [know] that privates must bleed by the thousands for the glory of admirals, [illegible] and post captains, that the only reports to which the sailor or marine can arrive, is to have his name printed on the papers and against it, "*thigh badly fractured, since amputated, and likely to recover*," and in a few months after, "*bravely fighting in the mum[illegible]*" and last under it, "we are happy to announce that though not quite successful this time, yet *the admiral and officers are in high spirits* and having put into Jamaica to refit, intend to look at them again."

Elsewhere in the body politic, but most especially among "tradesmen, mechanics, and the industrious classes," the proto-businessmen of the age exhorted their listeners, in the words of George Warner, a sailmaker in New York, to do their "utmost at election to prevent all men of talents, lawyers rich men from being elected." Simila sentiments directed the conduct o the country's cultural affairs, and b 1803, the Reverend Samuel Miller besieged by a new and rude profusion of pamphlets, handbills, posters, broad sides, and newspapers, was appalled to discover that America's intellectu al leadership had fallen (then as now into "the hands of persons destitute at once of the urbanity of gentlemen the information of scholars, and the principles of virtue."

If not by 1805, the year that Lewi and Clark departed for the headwater of the Missouri River, then certainly by 1812, the United States had trad ed the revolutionary generation' dream of a classical republic governed in Wood's phrase, by "notable geniuse and great-souled men" for a democra cy owned and operated by commor people with a common interest i making money and getting ahead. Th terms of the deal—vulgarity, rootless ness, and anti-intellectualism as th price for economic and political free dom—apparently still confuse our own latter-day mercantile gentry. In thei grandiose moments they imagine tha they want leaders in the eighteenth century naval tradition, officers o high purpose and resolve eager to en gage the enemies of mankind on five continents and seven oceans. News paper columnists puff themselves up like frogs and write stirring editorial about sending troops to Bosnia, re drawing the map of southern Europe making an example of the thugs i Belgrade and Zagreb so that ruffian elsewhere in the world won't take i into their heads to leap and dance an blow up trains. But the mood soon passes, and the experts assembled i the grand ballroom remember tha sometimes ships sink and armies per ish. They consult the polls and thei own fears, and bargain for the kind o leadership that makes a brave show in the world but doesn't cost much more than the annual dues charge by the Council on Foreign Relations No matter how loud their protesta tions to the contrary, and no matte how busily they take notes, they pre fer as little leadership as possible, an in President Clinton they find the an swer to all their prayers.



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HARPER'S INDEX

Number of Dan Rostenkowski's 1993 campaign contributions of more than $200 that came from Illinois residents : 0

Limit on congressional campaign spending proposed in the House campaign reform bill : $600,000

Average cost of a House campaign in 1992 : $389,588

Portion of contributions made by Oliver North's PAC that has gone to congressional candidates other than North : 1/20

Percentage of Americans earning less than $15,000 per year who say that Americans are "materialistic" : 39

Percentage of Americans earning more than $50,000 per year who say this : 67

Amount investor George Soros lost speculating in the world currency market last February 14 : $600,000,000

Change in the value of the stock holdings of Viacom's CEO during Viacom's takeover of Paramount : –$3,200,000,000

Contributions mailed to convicted murderer Jeffrey Dahmer in prison last year : $11,000

Percentage of Americans who say that women "sometimes deserve to be hit by their husbands or boyfriends" : 12

Percentage who say that men "sometimes deserve to be hit by their wives or girlfriends" : 29

Ratio of positive to negative calls viewers made to ABC last March after the "lesbian kiss" episode of *Roseanne* : 3:1

Number of U.S. colleges and universities offering the "Creative Dating Workshop" : 100

Number of students enrolled this term in "The Films of Keanu Reeves," a course offered at a Pasadena arts college : 15

Amount by which a California public-school teacher's average annual salary exceeds that of a state prison guard : $1,000

Percentage of all U.S. prison space that was built in the last decade : 74

Percentage of U.S. federal judges who oppose mandatory minimum sentencing : 92

Rank of arson among the crimes for which U.S. teenagers are most often arrested : 1

Rank of flowers, perfume, and fire extinguishers among Mother's Day gifts Americans consider "very appropriate" : 1, 2, 3

Number of people employed in the creative department of Hallmark Cards : 670

Chances that a job created in the United States this year will require a college degree : 1 in 3

Chances that a Somali child will complete the fifth grade : 1 in 50

Percentage of women in Sub-Saharan Africa who use birth control : 9

Chances that an abortion performed last year anywhere in the world was illegal : 1 in 3

Percentage change in the eastern German birth rate since the fall of the Berlin Wall : –56

Percentage change in the Russian birth rate since 1985 : –35

Number of periodicals shut down by the Russian government since 1993 : 15

Chances that an applicant to the Chinese Communist Party in 1992 was accepted : 1 in 7

Number of films designated as compulsory viewing for Beijing schoolchildren by the Chinese government last fall : 34

Maximum fine for publishing "unverified information" in Albania, according to a new law passed last fall : $8,000

Percentage of all magazines on U.S. newsstands last year that went unsold : 57

Chances that a man using a computer at work believes that PCs are "too technical for most people to use easily" : 1 in 5

Chances that a woman using a computer at work believes this : 1 in 10

Percentage of American adults who believe that if they used a personal computer they would damage it : 32

Number of patents for hair-replacement technologies on file at the U.S. Patent Office : 114

Ratio of the average speed of growth of human hair to the average speed of growth of Kentucky bluegrass : 1:7

Maximum flying speed of a dragonfly, in miles per hour : 30

Price of an electronically animated bluebird, featuring "digitally recorded birdsong," from The Sharper Image : $29.95

Percentage of male indigo buntings that change their tune between May and June : 80

Figures cited are the latest available as of March 1994. Sources are listed on page 70.
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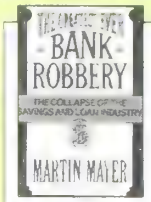
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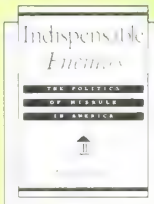
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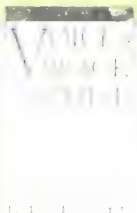


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READINGS

[Essays]

THE ELECTRONIC HIVE: TWO VIEWS

1. REFUSE IT

Adapted from The Gutenberg Elegies: The Fate of Reading in an Electronic Age, *by Sven Birkerts, to be published later this year by Faber and Faber. Birkerts's essay "Close Listening: The Metaphysics of Reading an Audio Book" appeared in the January 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

The digital future is upon us. From our President on down, people are smitten, more than they have been with anything in a very long time. I can't open a newspaper without reading another story about the Internet, the information highway. The dollar, not the poet, is the antenna of the race, and right now the dollar is all about mergers and acquisitions: the fierce battles being waged for control of the system that will allow us, soon enough, to cohabit in the all but infinite information space. The dollar is smart. It is betting that the trend will be a juggernaut, unstoppable; that we are collectively ready to round the corner into a new age. We are not about to turn from this millennial remaking of the world; indeed, we are all excited to see just how much power and ingenuity we command. By degrees—it is happening year by year, appliance by appliance—we are wiring ourselves into a gigantic hive.

When we look at the large-scale shift to an electronic culture, looking as if at a time-lapse motion study, we can see not only how our situation has come about but also how it is in our nature that it should have. At every step—this is clear—we trade for ease. And ease is what quickly swallows up the initial strangeness of a new medium or tool. Moreover, each accommodation paves the way for the next. The telegraph must have seemed to its first users a surpassingly strange device, but its newfangledness was overridden by its usefulness. Once we had accepted the idea of mechanical transmission over distances, the path was clear for the telephone. Again, a monumental transformation: turn select digits on a dial and hear the voice of another human being. And on it goes, the inventions coming gradually, one by one, allowing the society to adapt. We mastered the telephone, the television with its few networks running black-and-white programs. And although no law required citizens to own or use either, these technologies did in a remarkably short time achieve near total saturation.

We are, then, accustomed to the process; we take the step that will enlarge our reach, simplify our communication, and abbreviate our physical involvement in some task or chore. The difference between the epoch of early modernity and the present is—to simplify drastically—that formerly the body had time to accept the graft, the new organ, whereas now we are hurtling forward willy-nilly, assuming that if a technol-

CLINTON'S MIDEAST POLICY, EXPLAINED

March by Christine Shelly, the State Department's deputy spokesman, to a reporter who asked whether

"Well, I think our position on settlements

and other things. We do—the briefers—also,

you know, nothing has changed on that in

you know, I can refer you to, you know, to

haven't have anything—you know, I mean,

laptops, telephone answering machines, calling cards, fax machines, cellular phones, VCRs, camcorders, and CD players. Very quickly, with

moved into our lives, and with a minimum rip

called improvements of this sort "extensions of

might have begun to challenge our power

I am startled, though, by how little we are debating the deeper philosophical ramifications. We talk up a storm when it comes to policy issues—who should have jurisdiction, what rates may be charged—and there is great fascination in some quarters with the practical minutiae of functioning, compatibility, and so on. But why do we hear so few people asking whether we might not *ourselves* be changing, and whether the changes are necessarily for the good?

In our technological obsession we may be forgetting that circuited interconnectedness and individualism are, at a primary level, inimical notions, warring terms. Being "on line" and having the subjective experience of depth, of existential coherence, are mutually exclusive situations. Electricity and inwardness are fundamentally discordant. Electricity is, implicitly, of the moment—*now*. Depth, meaning, and the narrative structuring of subjectivity—these are *not* now; they flourish only in that order of time Henri Bergson called "duration." Duration is deep time, time experienced without the awareness of time passing. Until quite recently—I would not want to put a date to it—most people on the planet lived mainly in terms of duration: time not artificially broken, but shaped around natural rhythmic cycles; time bound to the integrated functioning of the senses.

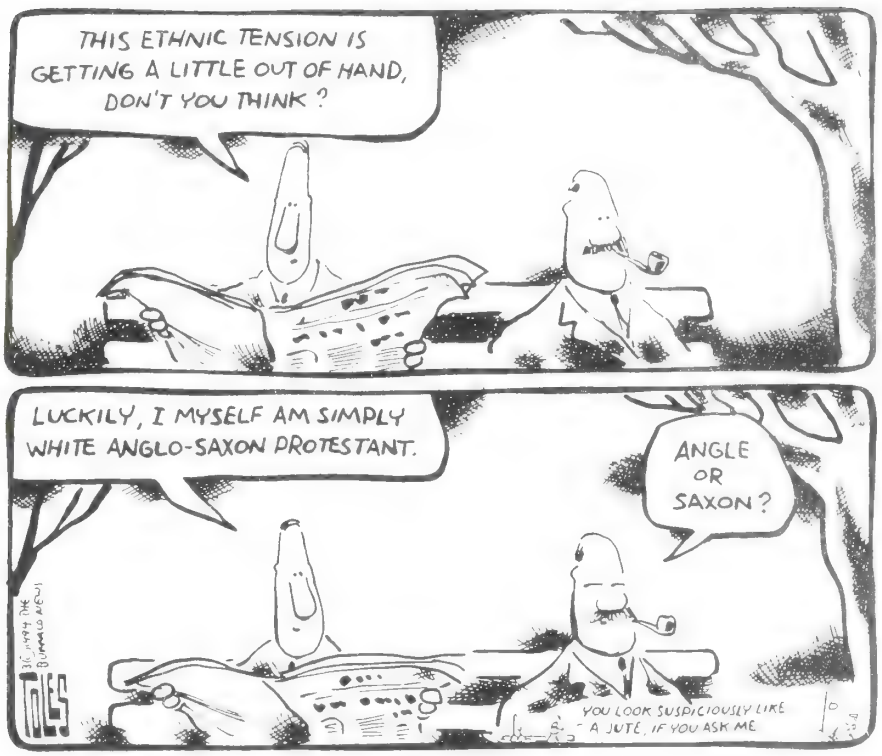
We have destroyed that duration. We have created invisible elsewheres that are as immediate as our actual surroundings. We have fractured the flow of time, layered it into competing simultaneities. We learn to do five things at once or pay the price. Immersed in an environment of invisible signals and operations, we find it as unthinkable to walk five miles to visit a friend as it was once unthinkable to speak across that distance through a wire.

My explanation for our blithe indifference to the inward consequences of our becoming wired is simple. I believe that we are bio-

creatures of extraordinary adaptability. We fit ourselves to situations, be they ones of privation or beneficent surplus. And in many respects this is to the good. The species is fit because it knows how to fit.

But there are drawbacks as well. The late Walker Percy made it his work to explore the im-

over and over, in his fiction as well as his speculative essays, he asks the same basic questions. As he writes in the opening of his essay "The Delta Factor": "Why does man feel so sad in the twentieth century? Why does man feel so bad in the



From the Buffalo News

very age when, more than in any other age, he has succeeded in satisfying his needs and making over the world for his own use.'" One of his answers is that the price of adaptation is habit, and that habit—habit of perception as well as behavior—distances the self from the primary things that give meaning and purpose to life. We accept these gifts of technology, these labor-saving devices, these extensions of the senses, by adapting and adapting again. Each improvement provides a new level of abstraction to which we accommodate ourselves. Abstraction is, however, a movement away from the natural given—a step away from our fundamental selves rooted for millennia in an awe before the unknown, a fear and trembling in the face of the outer dark. We widen the gulf, and if at some level we fear the widening, we respond by investing more of our faith in the systems we have wrought.

We sacrifice the potential life of the solitary self by enlisting ourselves in the collective. For this is finally—even more than the saving of labor—what these systems are all about. They are not only extensions of the senses; they are extensions of the senses that put us in touch with the extended senses of others. The ultimate point of the ever-expanding electronic web is to bridge once and for all the individual solitude that has hitherto always set the terms of existence. Each appliance is a strand, another addition to the virtual place wherein we will all find ourselves together. Telephone, fax, computer networks, E-mail, interactive television—these are the components out of which the hive is being built. The end of it all, the *telos*, is a kind of amniotic environment of impulses, a condition of connectedness. And in time—I don't know how long it will take—it will feel as strange (and exhilarating) for a person to stand momentarily free of it as it feels now for a city dweller to look up at night and see a sky full of stars.

Whether this sounds dire or not depends upon your assumptions about the human condition—assumptions, that is, in the largest sense. For those who ask, with Gauguin, "Who are we? Why are we here? Where are we going?"—and who feel that the answering of those questions is the grand mission of the species—the prospect of a collective life in an electronic hive is bound to seem terrifying. But there are others, maybe even a majority, who have never except fleetingly posed those same questions, who have repressed them so that they might "get on," and who gravitate toward that life because they see it as a way of vanquishing once and for all the anxious gnawings they feel who never any intimation of hopeful speak through the inner barriers.

My core fear is that we are, as a culture, as a

from depth—from the Judeo-Christian premise of untath[illegible] mystery—and are adapting our[illegible] ne[illegible] [illegible]s we are giving up on wisdom, the [illegible] [illegible] we replace it with truth in the web.

Here is, finally, a tremendous difference be[illegible] in the instrumental sense and communion in the affective, soul-oriented [illegible]

Somewhere we have gotten hold of the idea that the more all-embracing we can make our communications networks, the closer we will be to that connection that we long for deep down. For change us as they will, our technologies have not yet eradicated that flame of a desire—not merely to be in touch, but to be, at least figuratively, embraced, known and valued not abstractly but in presence. We seem to believe that our instruments can get us there, but they can't. Their great power is all in the service of division and acceleration. They work in—and create—an unreal time that has nothing to do with the deep time in which we thrive: the time of history, tradition, ritual, art, and true communion.

The proselytizers have shown me their vision, and in my more susceptible moods I have felt myself almost persuaded. I have imagined what it could be like, our toil and misery replaced by a vivid, pleasant dream. Fingers tap keys, oceans of fact and sensation get downloaded, are dissolved through the nervous system. Bottomless wells of data are accessed and manipulated, everything flowing at circuit speed. Gone the rock in the field, the broken hoe, the grueling distances. "History," said Stephen Daedalus, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to awaken." This may be the awakening, but it feels curiously like the fantasies that circulate through our sleep. From deep in the heart I hear the voice that says, "Refuse it."

ANYBODY HOME?

From "70 Tips for Improving Your Telephone and Voice Mail Communication," a booklet compiled by Val Chevron, a "professional consultant in telephone and listening skills." Chevron offers clients voice analyses and evaluations of their telephone skills, as

Preparing a voice-mail greeting for people who call you

[illegible] write a script for your greeting; a simple keyword outline will suffice. Use it as the basis for an effective, well-organized dialogue that will sound spontaneous and conversational.

Like a silent breath after every six to nine [illegible] smile, and watch the muscles relax.

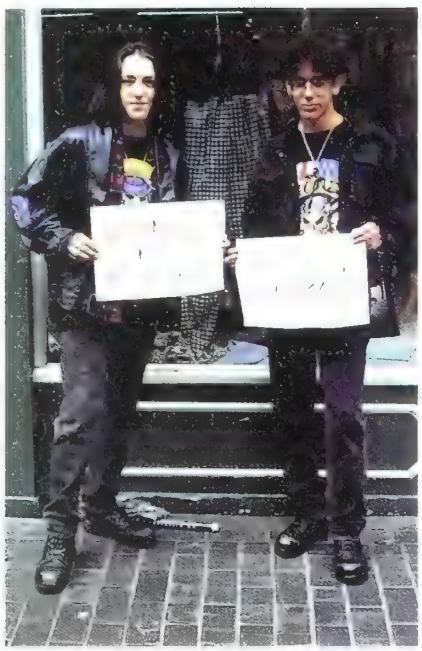
[illegible] instrument that can move up

2. EMBRACE IT

Adapted from Out of Control: The Rise of Neo-Biological Civilization, *by Kevin Kelly, to be published next month by Addison-Wesley. Kelly is a former editor of the* Whole Earth Review *and one of the founders of the WELL, a computer-conferencing system. He is currently the executive editor of* Wired *magazine.*

If twentieth-century science can be said to have a single icon, it is the Atom. As depicted in the popular mind, the symbol of the Atom is stark: a black dot encircled by the hairline orbits of several smaller dots. The Atom whirls alone, the epitome of singleness. It is the metaphor for individuality. At its center is the animus, the It, the life force, holding all to their appropriate whirling station. The Atom stands for power and knowledge and certainty. It conveys the naked power of simplicity.

The iconic reign of the Atom is now passing. The symbol of science for the next century is the dynamic Net. The icon of the Net, in contradistinction to the Atom, has no center. It is a bunch of dots connected to other dots, a cobweb of arrows pouring into one another, squirming together like a nest of snakes, the restless image fading at indeterminate edges. The Net is the archetype displayed to represent all circuits, all intelligence, all interdependence, all things economic and social and ecological, all communications, all democracy, all groups, all large systems. This icon is slippery, ensnaring the unwary in its paradox of no beginning, no end, no center.







From "Signs that say what you want them to say and not signs that say what someone else wants you to say," an ongoing photographic project by Gillian Wearing. Wearing approaches strangers on London streets, offers them materials to make their own signs, and then photographs them. Her work will be exhibited in June at the Interim Art gallery, in London.

The Net conveys the logic of both the computer and nature. In nature, the Net finds form in, for example, the beehive. The hive is irredeemably social, unabashedly of many minds, but it decides as a whole when to swarm and where to move. A hive possesses an intelligence that none of its parts does. A single honeybee brain operates with a memory of six days; the hive as a whole operates with a memory of three months, twice as long as the average bee lives.

Although many philosophers in the past have suspected that one could abstract the laws of life and apply them to machines, it wasn't until computers and human-made systems became as complex as living things—as intricately composed as a beehive—that it was possible to prove this. Just as a beehive functions as if it were a single sentient organism, so does an electronic hive, made up of millions of buzzing, dim-witted personal computers, behave like a single organism. Out of networked parts—whether of insects, neurons, or chips—come learning, evolution, and life. Out of a planet-wide swarm of silicon calculators comes an emergent self-governing intelligence: the Net.

I live on computer networks. The network of networks—the Net, also known as the Internet—links several million personal computers around the world. No one knows exactly how many millions are connected, or even how many intermediate nodes there are. The Internet Society made an educated guess last year that the Net was made up of 1.7 million host computers and 17 million users. Like the Ledaye, the Net is controlled by no one; no one is in charge. The Net is, as its users are proud to boast, the largest functioning anarchy in the world. Every day hundreds of millions of messages are passed between its members without the benefit of a central authority.

In addition to a vast flow of individual letters, there exists between its wires that disembodied cyberspace where messages interact, a shared space of written public conversations. Every day authors all over the world add millions of words to an uncountable number of overlapping conversations. They daily build an immense distributed document, one that is under eternal construction, in constant flux, and of fleeting permanence. The users of this media are creating an entirely new writing space, far different from that carved out by a printed book or even a chat around a table. Because of this impermanence, the type of thought encouraged by the Net tends toward the non-dogmatic—the experimental idea, the quip, the global perspective, the interdisciplinary synthesis, the unelaborated, often emotional, response. Many participants prefer the quality of writing on the Net to book writing because Net writing is of a conversational, peer-to-peer style, frank and communicative, rather than precise and self-consciously literary. Instead of



WE'VE [illegible] VOICE, FAX AND DAT

[illegible] make conference calls, send and receive faxes, even access databases as



OMMUNICATIONS TO ANOTHER LEVEL.

do from the office. Except it does it all at 35,000 feet. GTE *It's amazing what we can do together.*

DECONSTRUCTING THE BOOK

[illegible] complete conferencing system in Sausalito, California. The topic began as a discussion of Martin Amis's novel Time's Arrow, in which the [illegible] and [illegible]. Contributors to the ongoing discussion consider what various activities and industries would be like in a world where time ran backward.

[illegible] on the publishing industry, which receives shipments of books, removes their bindings, reassembles the paper into folios, runs it through a machine that removes the ink, then takes the type out of the machine and the manuscript out of the trash and meticulously matches one against the other, sorting each [illegible] as it is matched to the marked-up copy. Then they remove all the marks from the copy and mail it back to the author, who completes the process by running the paper through his typewriter, taking off the ink, and putting the fresh clean paper back in the box so that he can return it to the store.

FLASH GORDON MD: . . . which ships it back to the factory to be reassembled into TREES!

ALBERT EINSTEIN: As the book is progressively unwritten, fewer and fewer people are familiar with the ideas that the author is espousing. Everyone knows who the last person to remember the book will be, since his name appears on every copy. But finally, even *his* memory of the work disappears. It dissipates gradually: first the small details go, then the discussion of his thesis, and he's finally left with one idea that sums up what the larger work once was. That idea doesn't go gradually, however. After he's finished unlearning the book, he's walking along the street, or perhaps eating dinner, and the idea is there. He's thinking about it quite strongly, perhaps congratulating himself on what a tremendous idea it was. Then suddenly it disappears forever.

[illegible] become, but they too start shrinking, becoming entirely underground. Finally, [illegible] as if trees once rise from [illegible] [illegible] all of the original work [illegible] words, disappearing and appearing [illegible]

the rigid canonical thinking cultivated by the book, the Net stimulates another way of thinking: telegraphic, modular, non-linear, malleable, cooperative.

A person on the Internet sees the world in a different light. He or she views the world as decidedly decentralized, every far-flung member a producer as well as a consumer, all parts of it equidistant from all others, no matter how large it gets, and every participant responsible for manufacturing truth out of a noisy cacophony of ideas, opinions, and facts. There is no central meaning, no official canon, no manufactured consent rippling through the wires from which one can borrow a viewpoint. Instead, every idea has a backer, and every backer has an idea, while contradiction, paradox, irony, and multifaceted truth rise up in a flood.

A recurring vision swirls in the shared mind of the Net, a vision that nearly every member glimpses, if only momentarily: of wiring human and artificial minds into one planetary soul. This incipient techno-spiritualism is all the more remarkable because of how unexpected it has been. The Net, after all, is nothing more than a bunch of highly engineered pieces of rock braided together with strands of metal or glass. It is routine technology. Computers, which have been in our lives for twenty years, have made our life faster but not that much different. Nobody expected a new culture, a new thrill, or even a new politics to be born when we married calculating circuits with the ordinary telephone; but that's exactly what happened.

There are other machines, such as the automobile and the air conditioner, that have radically reshaped our lives and the landscape of our civilization. The Net (and its future progeny) is another one of those disrupting machines and may yet surpass the scope of all the others together in altering how we live.

The Net is an organism/machine whose exact size and boundaries are unknown. All we do know is that new portions and new uses are being added to it at such an accelerating rate that it may be more of an explosion than a thing. So vast is this embryonic Net, and so fast is it developing into something else, that no single human can fathom it deeply enough to claim expertise on the whole.

The tiny bees in a hive are more or less unaware of their colony, but their collective hive mind transcends their small bee minds. As we wire ourselves up into a hivish network, many things will emerge that we, as mere neurons in the network, don't expect, don't understand, can't control, or don't even perceive. That's the price for any emergent hive mind.

At the same time the very shape of this net-

work space shapes us. It is no coincidence that the post-modernists arose as the networks formed. In the last half-century a uniform mass market has collapsed into a network of small niches—the result of the information tide. An aggregation of fragments is the only kind of whole we now have. The fragmentation of business markets, of social mores, of spiritual beliefs, of ethnicity, and of truth itself into tinier and tinier shards is the hallmark of this era. Our society is a working pandemonium of fragments—much like the Internet itself.

People in a highly connected yet deeply fragmented society can no longer rely on a central canon for guidance. They are forced into the modern existential blackness of creating their own cultures, beliefs, markets, and identities from a sticky mess of interdependent pieces. The industrial icon of a grand central or a hidden "I am" becomes hollow. Distributed, headless, emergent wholeness becomes the social ideal.

The critics of early computers capitalized on a common fear: that a Big Brother brain would watch over us and control us. What we know now of our own brains is that they too are only networks of mini-minds, a society of dumber minds linked together, and that when we peer into them deeply we find that there is no "I" in charge. Not only does a central-command economy not work; a central-command brain won't either. In its stead, we can make a nation of personal computers, a country of decentralized nodes of governance and thought. Almost every type of large-scale governance we can find, from the body of a giraffe, to the energy regulation in a tidal marsh, to the temperature regulation of a beehive, to the flow of traffic on the Internet, resolves into a swarmy distributed net of autonomous units and heterogeneous parts.

No one has been more wrong about computerization than George Orwell in *1984*. So far, nearly everything about the actual possibility-space that computers have created indicates they are not the beginning of authority but its end. In the process of connecting everything to everything, computers elevate the power of the small player. They make room for the different, and they reward small innovations. Instead of enforcing uniformity, they promote heterogeneity and autonomy. Instead of sucking the soul from human bodies, turning computer users into an army of dull clones, *networked* computers—by reflecting the networked nature of our own brains—encourage the humanism of their users. Because they have taken on the flexibility, adaptability, and self-connecting governance of organic systems, we become more human, not less so, when we use them.

[Transcript]

A BUMPY RIDE ON THE INFO HIGHWAY

From the official transcript of the first-ever on-line White House news conference, held in January by Vice President Al Gore over the CompuServe information network. Thousands of computer users took part in the forty-five-minute conversation, which was moderated by Bill Allman, a senior writer at U.S. News & World Report. *Most of the text of the conference, including the excerpt below, was generated before the vice president joined. The official transcript is twenty-one pages long; Gore first appears on page sixteen*

(Ricardo Bunge) Mr. Allman, I'm not seeing anything as I type...

(Jim Casey) Thx.

(Larry H. Lewis) is this working?

(John C. Burns) why am I not posting

(Rebecca Winters) Oh, now it is.

(Annette Leonard) isthis working?

(Zach) Can everybody hear/see me all right?

(Josh Harris) buffer

(Byron Odwazny) hello/status

(Jim Casey) Yes zach

(Zach) Thanks.

(Ben Huntoon) implimentation of Internet technology among

(Ben Huntoon) wealthy and poor school districts?

(STEVEN R. KOSS) should I see my = and name after hitting return?

(Hugh McArthur) ^

(Jim Casey) Steven: No.

(Sara Arnold) Hi.

(Betty Knight) This is a test

(Dion Douglas) No name will be returned after typing words

(george smart) this thing is going very fast

(Hugh McArthur) \test

(Lou) butter hellocam v

(Martin Vasko) josh...yes

(Alex Calvo) Bill, I feel I must apologize for all of us...

(Zach) So, Mr. Allman, how did you get him to agree to do this conference?

(Amy Harmon) hi

(Paul De Groot/Canad) [D

(Paul De Groot/Canad) [D

(Arthur Goldstein) Hello

(Robert Pellegrini) hello, is the VP there yet???

(mike powers) Annette: DOn't KNow

(Betty Knight) Hi

(AD) Hi

(jacquelyn a close) hello

(Susan Finster) A transcript of the confer

[...] [vi-rq
...ALL GEBERD HELLO)

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) the moderator this afternoon. Vice President

...of the White House in a

(Chrysanne Poole) 0//send hello

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) "question" [/ques-

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) the question queue. When you get the message

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) that it is your turn to ask a question,

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) please begin by telling us where you are

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) from. It is not necessary to state your

(Josh Harris) How does this conference work?

(Gary E. Hogsten) Hello from hellohello

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) name, as this appears automatically. You

(Jonathan Fligner) Hi Bill

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) should keep your question as short as

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) characters long—followed by carriage

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) be online shortly. This conference is also

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) being broadcast live on C-SPAN cable television.

(Bill Allman/US NEWS) Thank you.

(rivi) S5tG>U13=R(iLejC63

THE OLD NEW AGE

From a press release distributed by NewAge Industries, a manufacturing company located in Willow Grove, Pennsylvania. NewAge was founded in

A

Age movement.

"Nothing could be further from the truth," states Kenneth D. Baker, vice president of the ... founder, Raymond E. Baker. "My fear," says Baker, "is that potential customers who do not ascribe ... New Age philosophy will be scared off by our name. In fact, earlier this summer an incident occurred in which an engineer called our sales de... 'I'm not selling' because he thought there ... tion. These incidents are becoming ...

... wants it known that NewAge In... typical American corporation. ... are trying to put down the New ... Baker says, "but we are trying ...

[How-to]

FRIENDSHIPPING MADE EASY

From "Master Prospectors Don't Build Bridges" by John Kalench, in the February issue of FreEnterpri$e: America's Journal of Income Opportunities, *a monthly magazine about "network marketing," published in Tucson, Arizona. Network marketers sell products such as cosmetics and jewelry door-to-door or by phone on a commission basis; they also work to recruit salespeople, or "distributors," into their marketing "network," and receive additional commissions for their distributors' sales. Kalench is president of* Millionaires in Motion, *"the premier educational company of the Network Marketing industry."*

Master Prospectors, those who have excelled in network marketing, love the idea that the world is their oyster. They understand that you never know where pearls are going to surface. You could meet a pearl at a museum, in a hotel lobby, in a supermarket checkout line, on a train, at a basketball game. One Master Prospector I know hired a maid to clean his condo. Now she's a leader in his network, earning a strong six-figure income. Another Master Prospector discovered a pearl working as a bellboy in the hotel



From "The Body of a House," a series of eight paintings by Robert Beckmann that appeared this winter at Here, a New York City gallery. Beckmann lives in Henderson, Nevada, near the Department of Energy's Nevada nuclear test site

where he held his opportunity meetings. Yet another Master Prospector got into an auto accident and enrolled the woman whose fender he crunched!

So if you want to be a huge success in Network Marketing, turn yourself into a friend-making machine. Making friends, or "friendshipping," as some people now call it, is a Master Prospector's stock-in-trade.

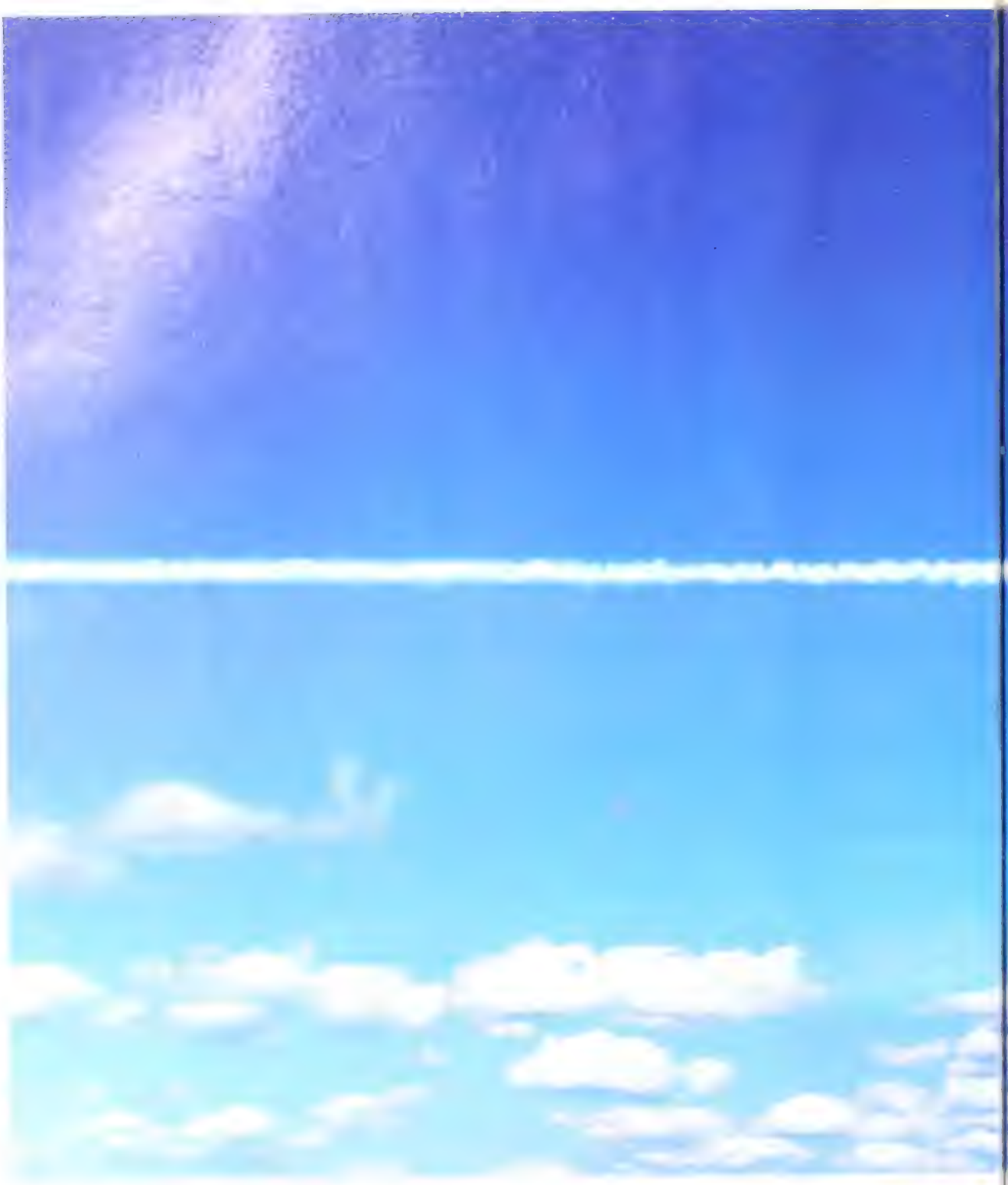
Too often, men and women who are new to our business are so anxious to get people into their network that the first thing they do when they're introduced to someone new is blurt out, "Hi! Want to become a distributor?"

Wrong!

Why not make a friend *first?* Once you have mastered the art of making friends, you should *never* have to search for prospects again.

One quality that all Master Prospectors share is an insatiable curiosity about the people they meet. In your friendshipping conversations, display a sincere curiosity about the other person by asking him or her questions about home, family, or work. Besides making the person feel comfortable as your friend, these questions serve another purpose: they provide you with that individual's unfulfilled desires, frustrations, dreams, and hopes. Use the answers to develop a transition to talking about your business; for instance, "Maybe you can help me. I'm looking for people who want to earn money without having to go to an office from nine to five every day. You know, people who want to spend more time with their kids." or "Maybe you can help me. Do you know anyone who's looking for a career change?"

I know many Master Prospectors who have spent years cultivating friendships with people they would like to offer their business opportunity to! It's not that they are shy or are stalling until they get up the courage to make their presentation. It's just that sometimes special people and special circumstances call for special considerations. Don't be afraid to give things enough time to grow.



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"Carnival: Los Carneros (Festivity of the Sheep) Frontera, El Hierro," by Cristina García Rodero. From Festivals & Rituals of Spain, a collection of García Rodero's photographs, published by Harry N. Abrams. During the festival, which

GERMAN HATRED (OF GERMANS)

E

To some extent, the itch to get away seems, along with declining birth rate, like one of the few universally applicable consequences of material prosperity in modern times. But there is nonetheless something observably forced about the German insistence not just on going away but on going *abroad*. The French, however fond they may be of Tahiti or New York, have not abandoned Provence or the chateaux of the Loire Valley. The Italians, for their part, still relish the time they can spend in the northern countryside. But the Germans are different. Their desire to go abroad is to a large extent fueled by a desire to leave their own country, and that urge to flight is itself an emblem of the profound discomfort so many Germans feel about the simple fact of their being German. Preferring to take one's vacations in Italy rather than in the Black Forest offers some degree of manumission from the sin of being German. When an acquaintance of mine told me that she really felt more like herself in Umbria, she was saying she felt less German. And when another acquaintance told me that she and her husband were preparing for their regular month-long sojourn at their house in the south of France [illegible] an annual event—that given all the neo-Nazi attacks on guest workers, "we need a break from this terrible country, some time to recharge," she

meant recharge with non-Germanness, with that part of herself that she chose to see as spiritually alien to her own country.

That the region to which she and her husband were traveling had had more than its share of racist violence, and that, indeed, Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front was receiving as much as 20 percent of the vote in districts quite near where she stayed, seemed to this woman a matter of little consequence. German wickedness, German racism, was sui generis, and to bring up French racism was to refuse to face up to the facts. "You don't know the Germans like I do," she snorted.

The fact that there was 70 percent unemployment in Rostock-Liechtenhagen, the neighborhood where the most celebrated attack on an asylum seekers' hostel had taken place, seemed to be a matter of complete indifference to her. And yet only a few nights before, this same woman had given me a stern lecture about the economic underpinnings of the Los Angeles riot and the need to contextualize the violence that had taken place against whites and Asians. To talk to Germans of conscience these days is to constantly stumble over such confusions and passionate attachments.

During the Cold War, the unease that German liberals felt about their Germanness was often expressed as a loathing of materialistic, corporate West German culture. East Germans, from a distance, could be held up as a simpler, purer people. But when the Wall fell, it became clear that, far from wanting a "third way," the former East Germans, or "Ossis," wanted nothing more than to be part of that affluent West German consumer society from which so many on the left had distanced themselves so pridefully. Not only did the citizens of Leipzig and East Berlin want nothing to do with socialism, actually existing or otherwise, but they wanted goods and clothes with Western designer labels. This revelation produced an exquisite discomfort on the part of German liberals, an angst expressed as often in aesthetic terms as in moral ones. An acquaintance of mine in West Berlin, a distinguished translator of American and English literature, once tearfully rehearsed for me all the political and moral reasons that had undergirded her opposition to reunification. Then, returning to the present, she suddenly switched tacks. "Have you seen the white nail polish the girls use?" she asked. "Why, they are such conformists: now they're shaving their legs."

In the months after the Wall came down, tales of the Ossi as yahoo were the stuff of countless West Berlin dinner-table conversations. Less affluent West Germans might see their Eastern cousins as a threat to their pay envelopes, or as grifting rubes who expected the state to provide [illegible] pubs like the animus that could be found in the [illegible]. In such circles, the former East Germans were just too, well, German, and progressive people wanted nothing to do with them. [illegible] cratic counselor in Frankfurt, put it during one of

[Announcement]

MR. FIX-IT ROCKS

From a press release issued last fall by the Makita Corporation, a Japanese power-tool manufacturer

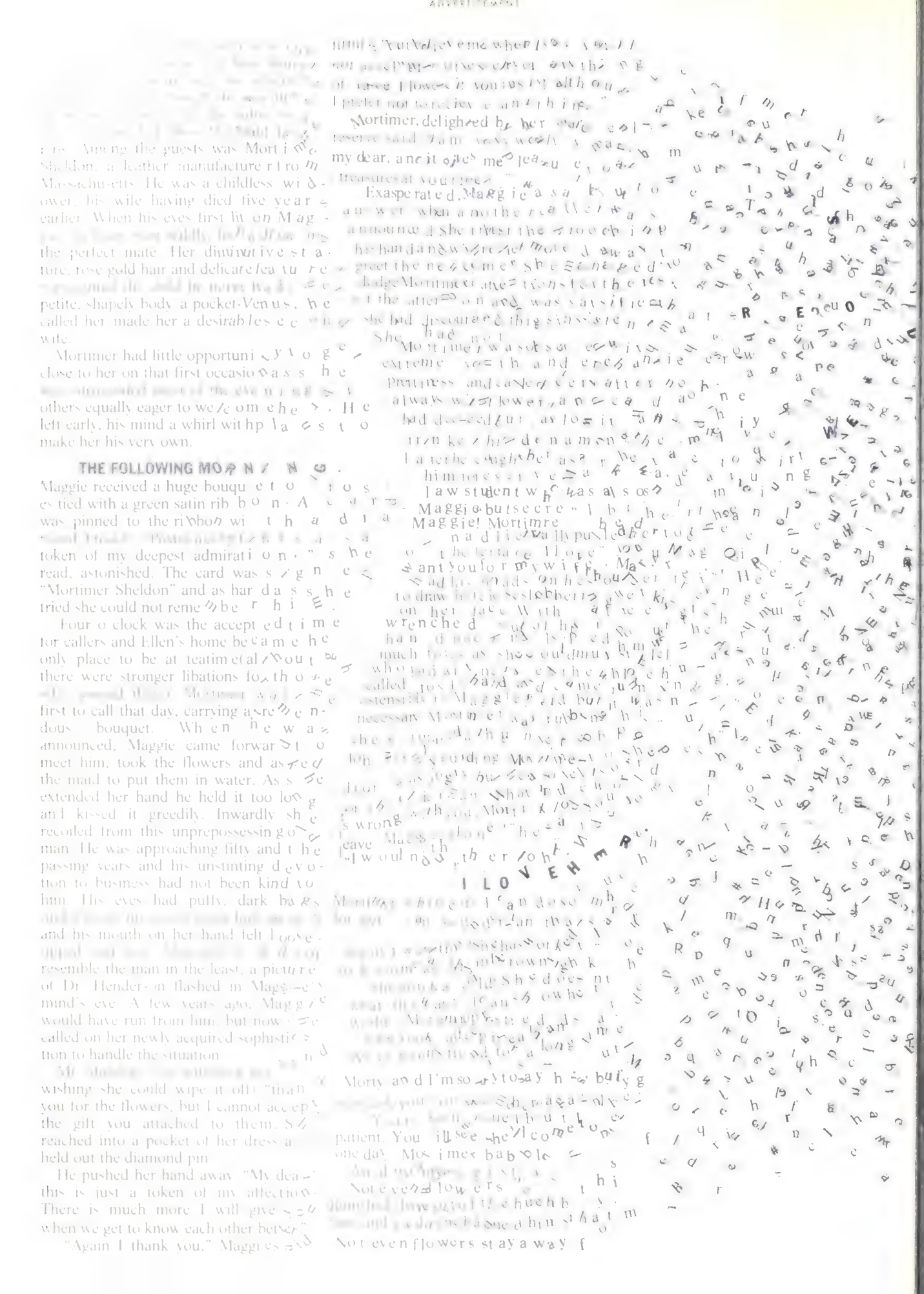
The Makita Corporation has decided to sponsor the nine-city Japanese concert tour of Mr. Big, an American hard-rock band.

One of the band's unique characteristics is that the guitarists Paul Gilbert and Billy Sheehan use a pick attached to a cordless drill to play their instruments. The musicians do two kinds of "cordless drill performances": in the first, they attach a guitar pick to a cordless driver drill and use it to play the strings of their instruments; in the other, they apply the drill to the guitar's pick-up, which amplifies the sound of the drill's motor.

The first song on the band's *Live Raw Like Sushi* album, called "Daddy, Brother, Lover, Little Boy (The Electric Drill Song)," showcased cordless-drill performances by Gilbert and Sheehan. During the band's "Lean Into It" tour, Gilbert carried a number of drills around with him, often posing with the hand tools for press photographs in order to establish his image as a "drill performer."

Since the band was using Makita battery-operated drills for its unique performances, Makita USA, a sales agency of the Makita Corporation, sponsored the band's 1992 tour. To kick off the tour, the band held a concert in San Francisco at which a picture of Makita's cordless drill was displayed behind the performers. Makita USA also uses Mr. Big in advertising campaigns. The success of this American campaign inspired the Makita Corporation to sponsor Mr. Big's Japanese tour.

Usually, corporations sponsor concert tours only when a band fits into their marketing strategy. But the Makita Corporation sponsors Mr. Big as an expression of gratitude to the band for using Makita's products in its performances. In addition to the firm's appreciation of the excellence and possibilities of Mr. Big's music, it is also their wish to share the excitement of the band's music with young people around the world.




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SAVING FACE FOR DESSERT



From "Lick and Lather," an exhibition of busts by Janine Antoni, on display last February at the Sandra Gering Gallery, in New York City. Antoni created a latex mold of her head and shoulders and used it to cast seven identical busts of herself in chocolate. She then licked each one in order to reshape it; the dark areas on the busts shown above are the parts she licked. Antoni lives in New York City.

the early debates on reunification, "I have more [illegible] than with Leipzig."

How much more comfortable it was to go to Italy and imagine one belonged there—indeed, [illegible] than to walk down a Berlin street and, after an encounter with some ill-clad prole from Potsdam or Marzahn, to realize that it was with Leipzig rather than with Florence that one shared a nation. And not just any nation, but Germany, about belonging to which any decent person who had grown [illegible] Hitler or the Holocaust [illegible] murder of the Jews was bound to have mixed feelings. Had the Ossis shared the guilt, such feelings [illegible] under the Communists, they seemed not to care for the [illegible] spurn at the waving of the national [illegible]

[illegible] friends been paying more [illegible]

with it the pieties of guilt and humility, but anyone who thought about history seriously for more than thirty seconds understood perfectly well that it could not endure. As the German novelist and critic Peter Schneider, a veteran of the extreme left politics of the Sixties and now one of the few dispassionate observers of the German scene, remarked to me, "For me the idea of nationalism is poison. I will never be proud to be a German in any conventional sense. But I do not see how I can reasonably expect my children would feel the same way. Nevertheless, people of my generation seem to expect them to, which is why they are so surprised by what is going on at the moment in Germany."

And what was going on, of course, was that time had passed and things had changed. Germany is powerful—recession or no recession—and, ethnically, increasingly heterogeneous—skinheads or no skinheads. Along with America, it has become the destination of choice for the migrating poor of the world; and along with Russia and America, its actions will determine the future of Europe. Few places matter more or understand themselves less well. Saddled with a long border with a new Third World and a labor force that global capitalism now seems to deem too expensive to be competitive, Germans have

more than enough to contend with without indulging in some fantasy of redemption through geographic flight. In any case, even as redeeming ideas go, Tuscany was a pretty weak one. If the Germans can save themselves—if any of us can save ourselves—it will not be by taking refuge in some agreeable bit of countryside.

[Response]

GERMAINE GREER WAVES GOOD-BYE

From "I smelt a rat, but didn't realise he'd be such a stinker," by Germaine Greer, in the February 7 issue of The Guardian, *a London daily. Greer, the British feminist and author of* The Female Eunuch, *had published an article in the January 25* Big Issue, *a weekly magazine sold by London's homeless, inviting to stay at her home any homeless person who "could accept what is being offered in the spirit in which it is offered." Before any genuine homeless people responded to her offer, Greer was besieged by reporters pretending to be homeless. Greer turned most of them away but was fooled by one reporter, Martin Hennessey, whom she allowed to stay. Hennessey published his account of his three days at Greer's house in the February 6 issue of* The Mail on Sunday; *he described Greer as "an extraordinary individual—strong, generous, and entertaining," but added that he was "not surprised at the poor response elicited by her article. She dominates a world of her own." Greer has threatened to sue Hennessey for invasion of privacy.*

The first fake homeless man arrived midmorning on Tuesday. When he was greeted with courtesy and kindness, he was overcome with such embarrassment that he could not accept the offer of a cup of tea but retired in confusion. The second was Martin Hennessey. It was midafternoon, cold, and coming on to rain. I opened the door to a cuddly, curly-haired boy on crutches. He carried a strangely clean bedroll, a small black bag, and a budding plant in a pot. "I'm absolutely desperate," he said, staggering fetchingly then hauling himself upright, wincing just enough. "I'll do anything—cook, garden." Then, with a grin quite ghastly in its impishness: "I'm quite a good cook."

This, like every other statement he made, was less than true. He was to prove himself spectacularly incompetent in virtually every field of endeavor, but as a liar you had to hand it to him. We did. Not that we believed him, you understand. We thought he was mad. Brain-damaged, actually. "What is his story?" I asked Shelley, my researcher. "Is he a dealer?" "Too wimpish," she said.

"Have you always had those?" I asked, indicating the crutches. "Only since Christmas," said he. "Cartilage. I used to play a lot of sport. They haven't [illegible] for the operation. It's as if I have a job or anything. There's no hurry." He gave me a moist puppy look through soft contact lenses. His boots were expensive, too.

The most obvious problem was that he smelt overwhelmingly of stale sweat and tobacco. To my great relief he asked for a wash. I let him have a bath in my bathroom but asked him to clean it after himself. I washed his bumming clothes and got him some of mine to wear while his were drying. His jeans were expensive. At dinner he drank a whole bottle of designer water. Shelley looked at me in alarm because he kept repeating himself and asking the same questions over and over, apparently unable to shut up. "We're in a position of trust here," he chanted. "If any more reporters come I'll call the police."

[Q&A]

THE PETER MOKABA NOBODY KNOWS

From an interview with Peter Mokaba, who was then president of the African National Congress Youth League, in issue No. 5 of Horizon, *a magazine published by the ANC Youth League, in Johannesburg. An introductory note to the interview explained, "Most Horizon readers know what leaders say about political issues, but what are they like as people?"*

HORIZON: Who are your role models?

MOKABA: Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo.

HORIZON: What are you reading at the moment?

MOKABA: *The State and Revolution*, by Lenin.

HORIZON: What is your favorite breakfast?

MOKABA: Porridge and white meat.

HORIZON: What car do you drive?

MOKABA: A BMW and a Jetta.

HORIZON: What is your favorite extravagance?

MOKABA: Designer clothes and a good time socially.

HORIZON: What is your greatest fear?

MOKABA: Betrayal.

HORIZON: Do you believe in the stars? What sign are you?

MOKABA: I am a maternalist. I don't believe in the stars. I'm a Capricorn.

HORIZON: What is your favorite word?

MOKABA: "Revolution."







JACOB LAWRENCE:

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The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., September 23, 1993-January 9, 1994

Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI, January 28-March 20, 1994

Portland Art Museum, Portland, OR, April 19-June 12, 1994

Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham, AL, July 10-September 4, 1994

The St. Louis Art Museum, St. Louis, MO, September 30-November 27, 1994

The Museum of Modern Art, New York, January 12-April 11, 1995

High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA, April 25-June 27, 1995

The Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO, Summer 1995

Chicago Historical Society, Chicago, IL, Fall 1995



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[illegible] He was on Prozac. If, while he was in [illegible] entitled to his privacy. Meanwhile he was [illegible]

At 11:00 A.M. the doorbell rang. Outside was another reptile as pudgy as Hennessey but less well bruited. Hind, he said his name was. I regret to say that I was fed up. Partly in reaction to the fact that the man had a mouth that reminded me of a piglet's anus, I threw him back into the night. At eleven the next morning Hind was back again, posing while a photographer set up [illegible]

All day long the phone rang. If a single genuine homeless person had strayed into my driveway he or she would have been met by the kind [illegible] Wales found intrusive, but the disaster that the British media were so impatient to instigate did not ensue. They had, as usual, ejaculated prematurely.

Except, of course, Martin Hennessey, who was [illegible] Shelley drove him to the supermarket so that he could choose his own breakfast food and such. Besides, we thought he should have a change of underwear. "Seeing he's such a wanker," Shelley said. He [illegible] jersey boys at Sharts until Shelley steered him to something [illegible]

ed to be taught to make bread. I showed him the easy way, but it proved too hard. It was agreed [illegible] would call back on him to see that the house did not flood or burn down.

The next day I had to be away, but I called in regularly because the man was giving me the creeps. Sure enough, that evening he sneaked off.

It is truly a shame that so intrepid an investigator should be limited to lying his way into the houses of old ladies and listing the contents of their bathroom cupboards. Whether Hennessey likes it or not I shall continue to share my house with people who like being there. And I hope he is offered a more significant challenge in the future. An investigator of such talent must have surely won the right to a tour of duty in Bosnia.

[Dissent]

ONLY-IN-L.A. LAW

From a dissenting opinion issued in February by Justice Thomas F. Crosby, a judge on the California Court of Appeal, in a suit filed against Metropolitan News-Enterprise, *a newspaper for the Los Angeles legal community. The suit was filed by Superior Court Judge Ricardo Torres, whom the paper has frequently criticized: one editorial referred to Torres as "a despotic twit"; another called him "a petty and spiteful autocrat." In 1991, Torres persuaded the court's executive committee to cancel 350 of the court's 354 subscriptions to the* News-Enterprise. *In response, Roger Grace, the paper's editor, had three employees distribute in the courthouse a fake memorandum, written on Torres's letterhead, that declared the* News-Enterprise *to be "contraband" and announced that courthouse offices would be searched for copies. Torres sued the paper for defamation, charging that many of his peers took the memo seriously. The case was dismissed on appeal; the appellate judges, with the exception of Justice Crosby, ruled that the memo was clearly a parody and was therefore protected by the First Amendment. Justice Crosby's dissent is excerpted below.*

Is the allegedly defamatory phony memorandum before us, purportedly issued by a judge, a First Amendment–protected parody? No. Even if we assumed that every judge of the superior court who received the memorandum recognized it as a parody, there could be no such assumption concerning the "[c]ourt personnel and others in Los Angeles, California" included in the majority's opinion. Many of them have seen stranger [illegible]

Los Angeles's legal history does not lack for examples of the occasional judge gone off the beam. [illegible] Cannon had a mechanical canary in cham-

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Leland Geller provided a deputy public defender with a child [illegible] and profanely and sexually abused courtroom employees, to name but a few instances of his unacceptable behavior. Joseph Grillo personally arrested a county employee, hauled him off to court, and adjudged him in contempt in a summary proceeding, all because the poor man followed his supervisor's direction to reject the judge's request for a plane ticket to Sacramento in order to lobby the legislature.

There is no disrespect intended here to judges in Los Angeles County. Orange County, too, has seen its share of "colorful" jurists. To cite just a few examples, various judges have personally seized an allegedly pornographic movie by mounting the stage during a Mitchell Brothers Theater presentation; ordered the flogging of a convicted criminal; forbade the operation of the entire city of Irvine; forbade the United States Post Office from election-eve deliveries of political mailers on at least two occasions because they were allegedly inaccurate; forbade the harming of an escaped hippopotamus (remember "Bubbles"?); and held the sheriff in contempt for following the orders of a federal district judge to release prisoners from overcrowded jails.

The majority has its rose-colored glasses on when it thinks people familiar with the local legal scene could not be taken in by the phony memo; stranger, much stranger, things have come from Los Angeles judges.



From In Th[illegible]

[Statement]

THE JOY OF FAT

From "Body Building," by Margaret Deirdre O'Hartigan, in the February issue of Dimensions, *a bimonthly published in Albany, New York, for "men who prefer the large figure and women who enjoy being admired in their abundant glory."*

Call me a bodybuilder, for lack of a better term. Bodybuilders treat their bodies as living sculpture, a plastic medium to develop to the fullest their ideal of physical perfection. That's what I do: I deliberately overeat to give my body the plushest, most voluptuous contours I can acquire.

Growing fatter is one of the most intensely sensuous things that I have ever experienced. I love the sensation of eating beyond satiation almost as much as I love the subsequent expansion of my entire body. The fatter I grow, the more exquisitely attuned to my own body and to the feel of another's touch I become. There is no small amount of satisfaction for me in seeing a lover's eyes widen in amazement at my growing bulk. But growing fatter is first and foremost a matter of loving myself, and only secondarily a form of erotic expression that I want to share with my lover.

My first experience with weight gain occurred when I quit smoking in the late Eighties. In less than three months I put on thirty pounds. But far from being dismayed, I found myself in a state of heightened emotional and sexual excitement. I enjoyed the added fullness in my breasts and thighs and loved how much more I jiggled when I moved. It was such a wonderful experience that over the next several months I experimented with deliberately overeating, and gained yet another thirty pounds. This latest increase was even more of an erotic experience than my first growth spurt. In addition, this time I discovered that overeating itself could be a near-sexual experience for me. In the intervening years I have on numerous occasions overeaten as much as possible for days on end, and each time the resultant fattening is as pleasurable as the time before.

What is there about being fed and fattened that I find so attractive? I thrill to the touch of a lover's hands massaging my belly when it is swollen to its capacity, his eyes telling me that he knows I'm ready for love. There is something almost primitive in having a lover encourage me to eat more, knowing how it puts me in the mood for making love. Sometimes I wonder if I'm not partaking in a human experience that goes back to the dawn of time, back to when our ancestors

[Photographs]

GRANDPA GOES TO HEAVEN







ris Haven Michaels. The photographs accompanied an interview with Michaels in the December/January issue of Photo Metro, *a photography magazine published in San Francisco. Michaels is the author of eighteen books, including* Now Becoming Then *and* Eros and Thanatos, *both published by Twin Palms Publishers, in Santa Fe. His most recent book is* Upside Down Inside Out and Backwards . . . Downside Up Outside In and Frontwards, *a children's book. Michaels lives in New York City; his work will be on display this fall at the Stephen Stills Gallery.*

dwelt in caves and the supply of food was uncertain that a surplus was stored like a treasure trove in the bodies of women. Surely there is something ancient in my own desire to equate the corpulence of such figures as the Venus of Willendorf.

I expect there are many people who would be aghast if they knew the pride I take in my swelling body and the joy it brings me—and others. Fine, let there be heartfelt affirmation and acceptance from them that I'm coming out as a woman who has deliberately grown fat—I'm coming out because what I'm doing is one of the most fat-positive things a woman can do in a society that hates fat and fat women in particular. I'm coming out as a fat woman who has chosen to be fat to let my sisters know that they are the most beautiful women on earth and worthy of emulation. I'm coming out as fat-by-choice to remind women like me, and the men who love us, that being fat is not an affliction but an accomplishment, and something to be desired. I see fattening as the next stage in growing to maturity, of blossoming and ripening. Being painfully thin as a child spared me the horrible denigration that fat children experience in this society, but I have since learned all too well what it is to try to make my way through a world designed by small-minded people with Lilliputian concerns. Yet, however maddening their attempts to constrain me may be, they are bound to fail. My horizons are expanding along with the rest of me.

[Monologue]

THE LAST OUTLAW

From "Red," a monologue by Eric Bogosian, performed last spring at the Minetta Lane Theatre, in New York City, as part of his one-man show "Pounding Nails into the Floor with My Forehead."

Come on in, man, come on in, dogs won't bite ya. Harley! Davidson! Sit! Come on in, they won't bite, 'less I tell 'em to. Sit down, sit down, lemme get ya a beer.

Here, man, check this shit out. Hawaiian sensimilla, all buds, lots of resin. Seven hundred for the quarter ounce. Check it out, excellent. Two tokes of this, you forget how to jerk off!

What do you do, man? Wait, lemme guess, I'm good at this. . . . You're a . . . federal narcotics agent! Hah-hah. No, no, wait a second—Armani suit, Rolex watch, shifty eyes. You're a stockbroker. Right?

It's cool, man, it's cool making money. I'm hip. Nothing wrong with money. As long as you know what to do with it. I deal to a lot of people make a lot of money. Some people are totally fucked up about money. Waste it on expensive cars, boats, expensive houses. Waste it on their kids. Put their kids through college. Save it. What the fuck is that about? You know what I mean? I mean, what's the point of making money if you're not using it to either get fucked or fucked up? Right?

bungee jumping without the cord.

One time, we had these two knapsacks full of psilocybin mushrooms. We got on these two Harleys. We were stopped at a red light. We just looked at each other, grabbed a handful, ate it, took off down the highway. Did not come back for three years.

We ended up in Loveland, Colorado, up in the Rocky Mountains. And one night, I'll never forget it, we were sitting around the campfire tripping, roasting this deer we had shot. We were just turning it, each of us holding a leg, right, and Kenny turns to me and says, "If I ever sell out, man, I want you to find me, stick a shotgun in my mouth, and blow my brains out."

So anyway, make a long story short: Kenny was always gambling. And six years ago, he bought this lottery ticket and he won. Not much. A million bucks. I thought the party should last about a month, right? But he decided he wanted to change his lifestyle. Cut off his hair, shaved off his beard, went back to school, learned to read. Met this chick, they got married, had a kid. Now he lives in New Jersey in this big house, a swimming pool, a four-wheel drive, and a lawn. He even has a job.

And you know, we sorta lost touch, 'cause he's busy all the time. So last month he had this barbecue, invited me and Rainbow up to his place. And, like, there's all these people there, squares. I'm cool. I'm playing with his kid. I tried to talk to Kenny and he started telling me how his pool filter worked. Right.

So anyway, me and Rainbow get kinda wasted. I mean, it's a party, right? And us and Kenny's kid get into this great food fight and one thing leads to the next and I'm kinda naked, in fact I am naked, on top of this gazebo thing next to the pool and Rainbow's throwing balls of guacamole at me, right? I'm laughing so hard, I fall off the gazebo and into the pool. Splashed all the motherfuckers. Pulled myself outta the pool and threw up all over his boss.

Next thing I know, Kenny's throwing me outta the party. He tells me I embarrassed him in front of his friends and I shouldn't come by no more. And I looked into his eyes and I realized he wasn't Kenny anymore. And then I remembered what he told me in Loveland, and anyway, long story short, I gotta go down to Florida next week and pick up a shotgun.

I will do that for him, man, because I love him that much. I do. He's as good as dead, man. All that's left is to bury him. 'Cause he forgot what life is all about: freedom.

Check me out, man, I'm forty-five years old. And you wanna know why I look so good? Because I get fucked up every day, man. I'm free. Live free or die. Don't tread on me. I'm an outlaw, man. Don't ever fucking forget it. ■

THE ART OF SELF

Autobiography in an age of narcissism

By William Gass

Self absorption, we are told, is the principal preoccupation of our age. It is an odd activity. I imagine a blotter soaking up its own absorbency and disappearing like a Cheshire cat by slow degrees. Still, if the star is more important than the team, the clan closer to our real concerns than the wider community; if minorities are to be promoted to major, and sects gain sole possession of the holy; then perhaps we should embrace the ultimate plurality our selfishness suggests and each perform our person to an empty house.

But what if we really want the world to watch? Look, Ma, I'm breathing. See me take my initial toddle, use the potty, scratch my sister, win spin the bottle. Gee whiz, my first adultery—what a guy! That surely deserves a commemorative marker on the superhighway of my life. So now I'm writing my own sweet history. However, there's a rub. What kind of figure can I count on cutting in another's consciousness or on that most merciless of public stages—the printed page?

The power to see ourselves as others see us is granted only to such disengaged observers as arrive from France by slow sail. Even my mirror puts just that bit of me before my gaze that I permit to fall there. I cannot see all round myself: not anywhere I walk or perch, or if I quickly whirl about to come upon my rear and take it by surprise. I might as well be asleep to such sides of me as disappear out of the corners of my eyes. Nor is the ugliness of my gnarled feet evident anywhere within my skin, where I alone can feel what splendid shape they're in. I think I have a winning smile, but to those on whom my smile is so winsomely conferred, the slightly turned-down corners of its lips convey despair, disgust, disdain—I know not what uninvited attitude in addition—and invariably, if in tears, though I argue my happiness like

William Gass is the director of the International Writers Center at Washington University, in St. Louis. His new novel, The Tunnel, *will be published next winter by Knopf.*

William Jennings Bryan on behalf of God, the weeping will convict me of a lie, as far as mere onlookers are concerned; because we really believe in no other consciousness than our own, and must infer the contents of another's mind from the perceptions that arrive in ours: from an overheard voice, its screams and groans and heavy breathing; from a body, its weight and posture; from someone's gait, the swagger; and from the face, its signs. And to the groan don't we affix our own ache, to another's risen flesh our yearning, to the sly wink our own conspiratorial designs?

It is safer by far, some say, to rely on behavior to speak by itself. History is something we catch in the act, and only acts have public consequences. Internal states are not even evidence, for pains can be imagined or misplaced, their groaning faked; better to see where the bone is broken or tooth decayed (John Dewey once argued that an aching tooth was not sufficient evidence of something anywhere amiss), and if I promise to give another all my love, it would be wise of the lucky recipient to wait and weigh what the offered love improves, and count what its solicitude will cost.

Feelings are not a dime a dozen, but the price of eggs is eighty cents. Which, do you think then, really hatches chicks in the yard?

Yes, as Aristotle insisted, the Good is what the Good Man does. Does the geologist need to infer an interior to his rock to read its past? Does the botanist really interrogate her plants? Does the zoologist attribute suffering to his frogs as he runs his scalpel round their gizzards? Why, we could weep a world of pain into a thimble and have hollow enough left over for a finger, since consciousness never struts and frets upon the stage or occupies a locker in the dressing room.

Biography, the writing of a life, is a branch of history. It requires quite a lot of labor, and therefore, when such a work is undertaken, one would expect the subject to be of some significance to history as a whole. Yet, except for the encyclopedia of the dead, as Danilo Kiš imagined it, where everybody's obit is already complete or in meticulous construction, the majority of mankind rest, as George Eliot wrote, in unvisited tombs and have left behind them nothing of their former presence but perhaps a hackneyed scratch upon a stone. Futility is the presiding spirit at every funeral.

Caesar's assassins did not stab him with their souls. In Hades, their shades are not stained by the murdered man's blood. That blood caked, that blood colored, only the blades.

Biography, the writing of a life, is a branch of history, but a broken branch, snapped perhaps heartlessly from the trunk, at the moment when Montesquieu directed the historian's eye to larger themes and toward those general social aspects from which the individual's traits, he believed, had more specifically sprung.

Yet if my tooth aches, it is after all my ache, though you may be better informed than I of the swelling; if my heart is sore, that soreness is unique, though its heaviness does not even tremble the balance bar; if I am afraid, do not complacently say you share my fear and understand my state, for how can you know how I feel? Isn't that our unpleasant complaint? Isn't that how we reject so much sympathy—stale candy on a staler plate? Since, to accomplish our death, there are a thousand similar and similarly scientific ways, but inside that shutting down of the senses there is a dread belonging to no one else even in the same sad medical shape; there is a large dread like an encountered rat, huge, as if fat as an idol, bearded like some ancient northern warrior, yet as indistinct in its corner and as ineffectual as lint. We can't make history out of that.

Knowing has two poles, and they are always poles apart: carnal knowing, the laying on of hands, the hanging of the fact by head or heels, the measurement of mass and motion, the calibration of brutal blows, the counting of supplies; and spiritual knowing, invisibly felt by the inside self, who is but a fought-over field of distraction, a stage where we recite the monotonous monologue that is our life, a knowing governed by internal tides, by intimations, motives, resolutions, by temptations, secrecy, shame, and pride.

Autobiography is a life writing its life. As if over? Or as it proceeds? Biographies are sometimes written with the aid of the biographee, and these few are therefore open-ended too, centrally incomplete, for death normally does the summing up, the bell tolls for the tale beneath whose telling the deceased shall be buried, with the faith that he or she shall rise again on publication day, all ancient acts only pages then, every trait an apt description, every quality of character an anecdote, the mind squeezed within a quip, and the hero's, or heroine's, history headed not for heaven but for the shelf.

If we leap rapidly enough from one side of this insistence to its denial—from the belief that only I can know how I am to the view that only another can see me really—we can quickly persuade ourselves that neither self-knowledge nor any other kind is possible, and, so persuaded, sink dizzily to the floor. Of course, we might, by letting the two positions stretch out alongside each other and observing how these two kinds of information are of equal value and are complementary, conclude that for a full account both the "in" and the "out" are needed. That was Spinoza's solution. It is usually wise to do whatever Spinoza suggests.

How does autobiography begin? With memory. And the consequent division of the self into the-one-who-was and the-one-who-is. The-one-who-is has the advantage of having been the-one-who-was. Once. The-one-who-was is, furthermore, at the present self's mercy, for it may not wish to remember that past, or it may wish the-one-who-was was other than the one it was, and consequently alter its description, since the-one-who-is is writing this history and has the upper hand. Every moment a bit of the self slides away toward its station in the past, where it will be remembered partially, if at all; with distortions, if at all; and then rendered even more incompletely, with graver omissions and twists to the plot by the play of the pen, so that its text will no doubt be subsequently and inaccurately read, systematically misinterpreted and put to use in yet another version, possibly by a biographer bent on revising the customary view of you and surrounding his selected subject with himself, as Sartre surrounded Genet, as a suburb surrounds a town and slowly sucks its center out.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHER THINKS OF HIMSELF AS HAVING LED A LIFE SO IMPORTANT IT NEEDS CELEBRATION, AND OF HIMSELF AS SUFFICIENTLY SKILLED AT RENDERING AS TO RENDER IT RIGHTLY



The autobiographer thinks he knows his subject and doesn't need to create a calendar of the kind the biographer feels obliged to compile so she may boast she knows what her subject did on every day of his life beyond kindergarten and his first fistfight. He is likely to treat records with less respect than he should, and he will certainly not investigate himself as if he had committed a crime and ought to be caught and convicted; rather he'll be pleased he's got his defense uttered early, because he understands that the biographer's subjects all end in the pen. No, he will think of himself as having led a life so important it needs celebration, and of himself as sufficiently skilled at rendering as to render it rightly. Certainly, he will not begin his task believing he has led a botched life and will now botch the botch. Unless, of course, there's money in it and people will pay to peer at his mistakes as they pay to enter the hermaphrodite's tent at the fair—ladies to the left, please, then gents, thank you, there to the right, between the chaste screen of canvas. An honest autobiography is as amazing a miracle as a doubled sex, and every bit as big a freak of nature.

The autobiographer tends to do partials, to skip the dull parts and circle the pits of embarrassment. Autobiographers flush before examining their stools. Are there any motives for the enterprise that aren't tainted with conceit or a desire for revenge or a wish for justification? To halo a sinner's head? To puff an ego already inflated past safety? Who is smug enough to find amusement or an important human lesson in former follies? Or aspire to be an emblem for some benighted youngster to follow like the foolish follow the standard borne forward in a fight. To have written an autobiography is already to have made yourself a monster. Some, like Rousseau and St. Augustine, cap-

Illustrations by Victoria Earle.

MANY LIVES ARE SO EMPTY OF INTEREST THAT THEIR SUBJECT MUST FIRST PERFORM SOME FEAT LIKE SAILING AROUND THE WORLD OR CLIMBING A HAZARDOUS PEAK IN ORDER TO ELEVATE HIMSELF ABOVE MERE EXISTENCE

italize on this fact and endeavor to hide deceit behind confession. Of course, as Freud has told us, they always confess to what their soul is convinced is the lesser crime.

How often, in one's second childhood, does one turn back to the first. Nostalgia and grief, self-pity and old scores, then compete to set the stage and energize each scene. Why is it so exciting to say, now that everyone knows it anyway, "I was born . . . I was born . . . I was born"? "I pooped in my pants, I was betrayed, I made straight A's." The chroniclers of childhood are almost always desperate determinists. Here their characters were formed; because of this wound or that blow, some present weakness can be explained. And how often does that modestly self-serving volume wear its author out, or he becomes bored with his own past and forswears his later years. Sometimes, too, Fate cuts the cord, and the autobiographer dies in his bed of love, still high in the saddle of the self.

Since it is considered unwise to wait to write your life till you're entombed and beginning to show your bones, you may choose to do it ahead of time, as Joyce Maynard did, writing her chronicle of growing up in the Sixties, *Looking Back*, at age eighteen. Why not? Our criminals are mostly kids; kids make up the largest chunk of our silliest, most easily swayed customers; and much of our culture is created for, controlled by, and consumed by thirteen-year-olds. Willie Morris, having reached at thirty-two what the jacket flap calls "mid-passage," paints, in *North Toward Home*, his cannot-be-called-precocious picture of the South.

Many lives are so empty of interest that their subject must first perform some feat like sailing alone around the world or climbing a hazardous peak in order to elevate himself above mere existence, and then, having created a life, to write about it. As if Satan were to recall his defiance of God, his ejection from Heaven, his yearlong fall through the ether, and even his hot landing in a lake of fire for our edification. Still, he didn't defy God just to make the news. Some choose to write of themselves merely as cavers or baseball players or actors or mountaineers, or create the biography of a business. Lives of crime are plentiful, as well as those of derring-dodaddies from the Old West. Others linger, like Boswells, at the edge of events, so that later they can say: "I was there, and there I saw King Lear go mad; I can tell you of a King who cursed, who cried, who called for his fool, who sat slowly down and sadly sighed . . ." Nevertheless, by accident sometimes you will find yourself in an important midst, Saigon falling around your person like a tower of blocks, or, as fortune smiles, have undertaken stale tasks that turned out more wellish than sickly; then an account of them, of how it felt to have grappled with Grendel, or have smelled the Augean stables before Hercules had swept them, or had the blood of an assassinated president sprayed over your shirt as you rode in his cavalcade; yes, then an account might be of value to future travelers who might not wish to go that way.



We have, well before us, the apparently noble example of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who was a foot soldier in Cortez's army. Annoyed by the incompetence of earlier authors, who spoke the truth "neither in the beginning, nor the middle, nor the end," he wrote his own *True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, and prefaced his honestly unpretentious work with this simple statement:

> That which I have myself seen and the fighting I have gone through, with the help of God, I will describe quite simply, as a fair eye witness, without twisting events [illegible] I am now [illegible] age, and I have lost my sight and hearing, and, as luck would have it, I have gained nothing of val- [illegible] and for this my true story they will [illegible]

We believe him because what he writes "rings true," but also because, as Cephalus in Plato's *Republic*, he is now nearly free of the world and its

ambitions, of the body and its desires. Almost equally wonderful is the account by Apsley Cherry-Garrad of Scott's last Antarctic expedition in *The Worst Journey in the World*, or James Hamilton-Paterson's luminous description of life on a deserted Philippine island, *Playing with Water*.

Nonetheless, these aren't autobiographies yet, for they're deliberately incomplete because no one wants to wade through your parents just to get to the South Face, or read about your marriage in order to enjoy your jungle escapades; furthermore, many of these memoirs are so completely about curious things seen or endured or somehow accomplished that they are little different than the excited jabber of the journalist who has stumbled on a camp of murderous thugs (you've seen the film) or stood in the square where the martyrs were made, and whose account consequently cannot be called by that uncle-sounding name of Auto, for where is the "I," old "I," sweet "I," the "I"? (Though the so-called new journalism, which Capote and Mailer practiced for a while, made even reporters into pronouns, disgracing the profession.)

Of course, there are a few minds whose every move is momentous, and a few whose character is so complex, complete, and elevated, we wish to know how? and why? and a few whose talent is so extraordinary, their sensibilities so widely and warmly and richly developed, we think naively, oh so naively, that they must have bounced out of bed like a tumbler, cooked morning eggs as if batted like a chef, and leaped to their work with the grace of a dancer. We think them gods, or Wittgensteins. Just because their ottavinos did not smell like something spoiled.

But he has a lifeful of private knowledge—our autobiographer. He knows of acts, small and large, that only he witnessed, only he remembers; she recalls a taste from an ancient swallow, or a scent that her lover loved but only she remembers, or a feeling on seeing her first egg cracked or baby beaten; yes, surely Lincoln recollects the rain on the roof when he signed the Proclamation; and don't you remember when you were a burgeoning boy whacking off in the barn before the boredom of the sheep—how the straw stuck to your sweater and a mysterious damp darkened the bowl of your knees? Yet just what use are these sensations to a real biographer, whose interest is in the way you lived solely because of its possible bearing on what you did? And whose interest in what you did exists principally because of the perplexes to which it led.

Between ego and object, we teeter-totter. When the autobiographer says, "I saw," he intends the report of his perception to modify his ego, not merely occupy his eye; he is the prophet who is proud he has talked to God, not the witness who is eager to describe God's garb and what leaves moved when the bush spoke.

But now for a little history of the corruption of a form. Once upon a time, history concerned itself only with what it considered important, along with the agents of these actions, the contrivers of significant events, and the forces that such happenings enlisted or expressed. Historians had difficulty deciding whether history was the result of the remarkable actions of remarkable men or the significant consequences of powerful forces, of climate, custom, and economic consequence, or of social structures, diet, geography, and the secret entelechies of Being, but whatever was the boss, the boss was big, massive, all-powerful, and hogged the center of the stage; however, as machines began to replicate objects, and little people began to multiply faster than wars or famines could reduce their numbers, and democracy arrived to flatter the multitude and tell them they ruled, and commerce flourished, sales grew, and money became the really risen god, then numbers replaced significant individuals, the trivial assumed the throne that was a camp chair on a movie set, and history looked about for gossip, not for laws, preferring lies about secret lives to the intentions of Fate.

As these changes take place, especially in the seventeenth century, the novel arrives to amuse mainly ladies of the middle class and provide them a sense of importance: their manners, their concerns, their daily rounds, their

THERE ARE A FEW MINDS WHOSE EVERY MOVE IS MOMENTOUS, AND A FEW WHOSE CHARACTER IS SO COMPLEX, COMPLETE, AND ELEVATED, WE WISH TO KNOW HOW? AND WHY?

NOISEMAKERS WHOSE TABLOID
TITILLATION BY GHOSTS STILL

spirations, their dreams of romance. The novel feasted on the unimportant and mimicked reality like the most cruel clown. Moll Flanders and Clarissa Harlowe replace Medea and Antigone. Instead of actual adventures, made-up ones are fashionable; instead of perilous voyages, Crusoe carries us through his days; instead of biographies of ministers and lords, we get bundles of fake letters recounting seductions and betrayals. Welcome to the extraordinary drama of lied-about ordinary life.

Historians soon had at hand, then, all the devices of exploitation. Amusing anecdote, salacious gossip would now fill their pages too. History was human, personal, full of concrete detail, and had all the suspense of a magazine serial. History and fiction began their vulgar copulation or, if you prefer, their diabolical dance. The techniques of fiction infected history, the materials of history were fed the novelist's greed. It is now difficult, sometimes, to tell one from the other. It is now difficult to find anyone who wants to bother.

Nowhere would one find the blend better blended than in autobiography. The novel sprang from the letter, the diary, the report of a journey; it felt itself alive in the form of every record of private life. Subjectivity was soon everybody's subject.

I do not think it should be assumed that history, which had always focused its attention upon wars and revolution, politics and money, strife of every sort (while neglecting most everything that mattered in the evolution of human consciousness, such as the discovery of the syllogism, the creation of the diatonic scale with its inventive notation, or three-legged perspective, to be for centuries the painter's stool), had found its final relevance with the inward turn of its narrative, for it now celebrated the most commonplace and cliché-ridden awareness, and handled the irrelevant with commercial hands and a pious tongue, as if it were selling silk.

Our present stage is divinely dialectical, for we are witnessing now the return of the significant self. Prince—not a reigning prince, of course—Madonna, not a saintly mother, to be sure—stars of stadium, gym, arena, and screen constellate our consciousness, as history becomes a comic book and autobiography the confessions of celluloid whores and boorish noisemakers whose tabloid lives are presented for our titillation by ghosts still undeservedly alive.

If we think about composing our autobiography in any case, where do we turn but to our journals and diaries, our appointment books, our social calendars? We certainly ask for the return of our letters, and review all our interviews to see if we said what we said, if we said it when they say we said it, and whose tape we may have soiled with our indiscretions.

But what are these things, which serve as the sources for so much autobiography? There are differences between diaries, journals, and notebooks, just as there are differences between chronicles and memoirs and travels and testimonies, between half-a-life and slice-of-life and whole-loaf lives, and these differences should be observed, not in order to be docile to genres, to limit types, or to anally oppose any mixing of forms (which will take place in any case), but in order that the mind may keep itself clean of confusion, since to enjoy a redolently blended stew, we are not required to forget the dissimilarity between carrots and onions, or when composing our apologia, the differences between diaries and letters and notes to the maid.

The diary demands to be entered day by day, and it is improper to put down for Tuesday a date who closed your dreary eyes on Saturday. Its pages are as circumscribed as the hours are, and its spaces should be filled with facts, with jots, with jogs to the memory. Diary style is staccato, wirelesslike. "No call from Jill in three days. My God! Have I lost her?" "Saw Parker again. He's still the same. Glad we're divorced." "Finished Proust finally. Champagne." And you are already disobedient to the demands of the form if you guiltily fill in skipped days as if you hadn't skipped them.

The journal still follows the march of the calendar, but its sweep is broader, more circumspect and meditative. Facts diminish in importance and are

replaced by emotions, musings, thoughts. If your journal is full of data, it means you have no inner life. And it asks for sentences, although they need not be polished. "I was annoyed with myself today for behaving like a teenager about the phone. Hoping for a call from Jill, who hasn't rung up in three days. She said she would call me, but was she being truthful? Dare I call her, though she expressly forbade it? I don't want to lose a customer who spends money the way she does." "Parker came into the shop, what gall! And ordered a dozen roses! I couldn't believe it! I know he wants me to think he's got another woman. God, he looked gaunt as a fallen soufflé. I think I'm happy we're no longer together. He never bought roses for me. What a bastard!" "Today was a big day, a memorable day, because today I closed the cover on Proust, I really read the last line, and 'time' had the final word, no surprise there. I feel now a great emptiness, some sort of symbolic letdown, as if a soufflé had fallen." You may revise what you have already written in your journal, but if you revise a passage prior to its entry, you are already beginning to fabricate.

Virginia Woolf's *Diaries* are therefore misnamed. We can see, in her case, as in that of Gide, the tyranny of the journal when, like a diary, it wants to have its day-to-day say, and we are led to imagine its keeper hoping from life only something worth writing about, living through the light for the sake of a few evening words and worrying whether her senses will be sensitive, her thoughts worthwhile, and a few fine phrases turned during yet another entry.

With the notebook we break out of chronology. Entries do not require dates. I can put in anything I like, even other people's thoughts. The notebook is a workshop, a tabletop, a file. In one of mine you will find titles for essays I hope one day to write: The Soufflé as a Symbol of Fragile Expectation. *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* are misnamed, for the language is far too polished, the episodes too artfully arranged, the perceptions too poetically profound; and there is not nearly enough mess; however, if Rilke's fictive *Notebooks* really resemble journals, Henry James's *Notebooks* are the real thing: a place to plot novels, to ponder problems, to consider strategies and plan attacks.



All three—diary, notebook, journal—are predicated on privacy. They are not meant to be read by anyone else, for here one is emotionally naked and in formal disarray. Unlike the letter, they have no addressee; they do not expect publication; and therefore, presumably, they are more truthful. However, if I already have my eye on history; if I know, when I'm gone, my jottings will be looked over, wondered at, commented on, I may begin to plant redemptive items, rearrange pages, slant stories, plot small revenges, revise, lie, and look good. Then, like Shakespearean soliloquies, they are spoken to the world.

IF I ALREADY HAVE MY EYE ON HISTORY, IF I KNOW, WHEN I'M GONE, MY JOTTINGS WILL BE LOOKED OVER, WONDERED AT, COMMENTED ON, I MAY BEGIN TO SLANT STORIES, PLOT SMALL REVENGES, REVISE, LIE, AND LOOK GOOD.

None of these three—diary, journal, notebook—is an autobiography, although the character of each is autobiographical. A memoir is usually the recollection of another place or personality, and its primary focus is outward bound: on the sudden appearance of Ludwig Wittgenstein in Ithaca, New York, for instance, or how Caesar said, "You too," before he fell, or what it was like to go to bed with Gabriele D'Annunzio. Even when the main attention of the memoir is inward, the scope of the memory tends to be limited (how I felt at the first fainting of the queen), and not wide enough to take in a life. Lewis Thomas takes the seventy-year life with which he assumes autobiography concerns itself, and first removes the twenty-five in which he was asleep, and then subtracts from the waking hours all the empty and idle ones to reach a remainder of 4,000 days. When he discounts blurred memories, self-serving reconstitutions, and other fudges, his count comes down a good deal more. The indelible moments left will most likely be found to occupy a thirty-minute burst. Such bits, he says, are the proper subject of the memoir.

What gets left out? That I read the papers. What gets left out? That I ate potatoes. What gets left out? That I saved my snot for several years. What gets left out? My second attempt to circumcise myself. What gets left out? The

shops in which I purchased shoes, my fear of the red eyes of rabbits. What gets left out? What demeans me; what does not distinguish me from anyone else: bowel movements, movie favorites, bottles of scotch. What is saved? What makes me unique; no, what makes me universal; what serves my reputation; what does not embarrass the scrutinizing, the recollecting self.

And if we make a collection of such memories, they will remain like unstrung beads, because an autobiography has to rely on what cannot and is not remembered, as well as on what is: I was born; I had whooping cough before I was three; my parents came to Sunnydale from Syracuse in an old Ford sedan.

Edward Hoagland's piece "Learning to Eat Soup" captures this feature perfectly, composed as it is of paragraphs made mostly of memories: balloons into which the past has been breathed:

> My first overtly sexual memory is of me on my knees in the hallway outside our [illegible] skirt standing above me, watching me.
>
> My first memory is of being on a train which derailed in a rainstorm in Dakota one night when I was two—and of hearing, as we rode in a hay wagon toward the distant weak lights of a little station, that a boy my age had just choked to death from breathing mud. But maybe my first real memory emerged when my father was dying. I was thirty-five and I dreamed so incredibly vividly of being dandled and rocked and hugged by him, being only a few months old, giggling helplessly and [illegible]

A good deal of what we remember is remembered from paintings and plays and books, and sometimes these are themselves memories, and sometimes they are memories of books or plays or paintings . . . whose subject is the self.

Testimonies, too, have powerful impersonal intentions. They do not simply wish to say: I was there, I saw enormities, now let me entertain you with my anguished account of them—of how I suffered, how I survived, remembered, yet went on—no no, for they, those witnesses, were there for all of us, were we, standing in that slow-moving naked line, holding our dead baby across our chest to hide the breasts, never staring at others in the row, mumbling a prayer in a vacant way—yes, this is our numb mind, mankind's misery, no single soul should bear it, not even Jesus, though it's said he tried.



It is healthy, even desirable, to mix genres in order to escape the confinements of outworn conventions or to break molds in order to create new shapes; but to introduce fiction into history on purpose (as opposed to being inadvertently mistaken) can only be to circumvent its aim, the truth, either because one wants to lie or now thinks lying doesn't matter and carelessness is a new virtue, or because one scorns scrupulosity as a wasted effort, a futile concern, since everything is inherently corrupt, or because an enlivened life will sell better than a straightforward one so let's have a little decoration, or because "What is truth?" is only a sardonic rhetorical question that regularly precedes the ritual washing of hands.

I know of nothing more difficult than knowing who you are, and then having the courage to share the reasons for the catastrophe of your character with the world. Anyone honestly happy with himself is a fool. (It is not a good idea to be terminally miserable about yourself either.) But an autobiography does not become a fiction just because fabrications will inevitably creep in, or because motives are never pure, or because memory will genuinely fade. It does not become a fiction simply because events or attitudes are deliberately omitted, or maliciously slanted, or blatantly fabricated, because fiction is always honest and does not intend to deceive. It announces itself: I am a fiction; do not rely on my accuracy, not because I am untrustworthy, but because I am engaged not in replication but in construction. There will be those who will try to glamorize their shoddy products by pretending they are true and then, when they fail to pass even the briefest

inspection, like the movies *JFK* and *Malcolm X*, dodge that responsibility by lamely speaking of "art." Fiction and history are different disciplines, and neither grants licenses to incompetents, opportunists, or mountebanks.

Next, in our travel across this map, we encounter the autobiography disguised as a fiction, presumably to prevent libel suits. For if the disguise cannot be seen through, what is the point of it as autobiography? And if it can, what is the purpose of the disguise? Conrad Aiken, possibly for the sake of objectivity, probably to injure only those who knew the code, put *Ushant* (an analysis of his relationship with Malcolm Lowry) in the third person. Whether confessed to or not, many novels are autobiographies in disguise—so it is often asserted—and the chief advantage of this strategy, apart from the fact that the novelist need only remember what springs most readily to mind and can avoid all the sufferings of scholarship, the burdens of fairness, the goal of truth, is that the narrator of a novel can whine and grumble and play the fool without automatically tarnishing his author's own character, which would otherwise be revealed to be spiteful, small-town, banal, and cheap.

Nevertheless, we should not mistake the adjective for the noun. A fiction does not become an autobiography simply because some of its elements are autobiographical; an autobiography is not a form of fiction merely because a few passages are mistaken, or misleading, or metaphorical. Just as anything properly called philosophy may be assumed to be philosophical without need of remark, so to describe a text as autobiographical is to imply that it is not a biography of the self by the self but is employing somewhat similar data or attitudes or techniques. And normally we would not study the autobiographical in order to decide what autobiography ought to be. That would be putting the quality before the noun. And the quality hasn't the weight of the horse or the bulk of the cargo in the cart.

Perhaps the gravest misuse of the adjective concerns the unconsciously epiphanic text. Any word, any gesture, any act may reveal some bit of the inner nature of its agent, and if we seek concealment, achieving it may seem easiest inside clichés, behind conformities, by means of immobility or any of those responses that are so entirely required by circumstance as to prohibit individuality: running from the bull, answering "hi" to "hi" and "fine" to "howyadoin'," dying when shot through the heart. But if Kafka puts a period on a piece of paper, we are shortly trying to lift it to look on the other side. "Yes, he ran from the bull but in a feminine way." "His 'fine' was flat as yesterday's soda." "Did you notice? He wouldn't say 'hi' till I said 'hi,' otherwise he wouldn't have recognized me at all but he would have skated by."

Freud preferred to examine the little ties that accompany more intentional behavior—our slips, mistakes, our silly errors—on the ground that these were free to be determined more entirely by the inner self. So a painting that is wholly abstract might be more revealing of the painter's nature than a realistically rendered city street, because on the city street the lamp would have to go here, the pub's sign there, the leaded glass beneath, and the narrow sidewalk would have to accompany the stretch of cobbles.

However, autobiography is about a different business: it is an intentional revelation that may in addition, and by its openness, conceal; but it is not a fundamental mode of concealment that then habitually slips up. And the finer the artist, the less likely that epiphanies will be plentiful, because the requirements of form are far more demanding than most determining historical causes and create their own outlines, their own noses, their own internal relations.

In an autobiography, the self divides, not severally into a recording self, an applauding self, a guilty self, a daydreaming self, but into a shaping self: it is the consciousness of oneself as a consciousness among all these other minds, an awareness born much later than the self it studies, and a self whose existence was fitful, intermittent, for a long time, before it was able to throw a full beam upon the life already lived and see there a pattern, as a plowed field seen from a plane reveals the geometry of the tractor's path.

IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY THE SELF DIVIDES, NOT SEVERALLY INTO A RECORDING SELF, AN APPLAUDING SELF, A GUILTY SELF, BUT INTO A SHAPING SELF—A CONSCIOUSNESS OF ONESELF AS A CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG THESE MINDS

When we remember a life we must remember to remember the life lived, [illegible] gets, pissing down basement steps, bragging to his friends of the horrors he has seen; and then there is the old man he will become, looking back, horrified by the horrors the child was a party to, outraged by the awfulness of it all or, conversely, pooh-poohing those few tears once shed over a broken balloon," which, when those few tears occurred, stood for total disconsolation and the child's first sense of how fragile the world and its pleasures are. Upon the child the autobiographer must not rest her knowledge of Greek, her memories of deportation, of her father's fascism, of the many untrustworthy men she has had to turn away; yet she cannot look back as if blind to the person she now is, as if unable to think or write, as she now can, just because she is recalling the death of her father and how he sat for several hours in his favorite chair before the fire, growing cold beneath the warmth of its familiar and friendly flames.

So shall we undertake, first, to describe the nature of this historian who picks now at the scab of his history? And to do that, won't we have to split [illegible] Paul Valéry's Monsieur Teste imagines, "between the observer of our present self, the so-called autobiographer, the self whose life has been no longer than . . . six hours? since it was then we decided to write an account of our life . . . ten days? since it was then our spouse left the family house forever . . . or, eight weeks? since it was then our finances were found to have been fraudulently obtained . . . or, twenty years? Is it that long since we've changed? If we ever have; if we haven't been Sir Walter Scott, the author of *Waverley*, from the day we were born, when the nurse came to our papa and said, You have a bouncing baby boy, sir, the author of *Waverley*, who has arrived at fully half a stone; as if our books were in our genes as well as [illegible]

That's not an entirely silly suggestion. When, in former philosophies, the existence of a soul or self was argued for, it was always pointed out that our birth name named us as a subject, not as a predicate; that the subject was that enduring and unchanging substance to which life's changes occurred, and if there were none such, and the self altered as a cloud, there'd be no nucleus around which our characteristics might circle like wagons, no title to the text [illegible] intuition of that central self (which might indeed be genetic), whereas the autobiographical (the adjective) took up the cause of the predicates and was concerned solely with the accidents of time and place, the vicissitudes of the [illegible] contriving." So mightn't we then collect these, arrange them, if it seems right, chronologically, as Walter Abish suggests in his brilliantly construct- [illegible] differences between lives but their sameness, their commonness, their com-

stories

watched as while our outside self shaved (not the mirror); and if it was that [illegible]

Mort Vain, the saintly Spinoza or the beast of Belsen?

WITNESS TO ANOTHER EXECUTION

In Texas, death walks an assembly line

By Susan Blaustein

The road from Austin to Huntsville, Texas, runs past oil rigs and tin-roofed homes whose ramshackle porches sag under the weight of old refrigerators and trailer parts, past red barns and white fences and hand-painted signs advertising Brahman Bulls and Suzie's Bar-B-Q, and on a quiet evening last August, following the road by a succession of tiny Baptist graveyards and watching the swifts dive and glide in the deepening blue, I noticed an anti-littering sign (DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS!) and remembered why I was driving northeast. After that night, at least one man wouldn't be messing with Texas any time soon, and I was going to witness his execution.



Outwardly a sleepy little Southern town, Huntsville is surrounded by seven prisons that house 11,800 inmates, 376 of them locked in five-by-nine-foot cells awaiting their carefully premeditated, supposedly painless, government-administered deaths. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, known as the TDC, is Huntsville's principal industry, and during the busier seasons the state executes as many as two men a week, making the town the nation's capital of capital punishment. As a member of the press pool, I planned to attend the execution later that night of Carl Eugene "Bo" Kelly of Waco, Texas, who had spent twelve years under sentence of death for his part in the brutal murder of two young men. The series of efforts by Kelly's lawyers to get his execution stayed—on the grounds that he had suffered brain damage as a result of severe childhood abuse; that he had been high on barbiturates, Valium, marijuana, and alcohol at the time of his crime; that he was improperly compelled by police to confess and sentenced more harshly than his accomplice; that he had been heartwarmingly rehabilitated—had all failed. That morning, in Austin, the governor's office had informed Kelly's lead attorney, Rob Owen, that his client's chances of executive clemency were slim.

The town square was deserted, but beyond its one-block stretch of quaintly renovated shops I found a glowing white Dairy Queen in which two female prison guards, both of them in gray uniforms, were sharing gossip and ice-cream sundaes. The DQ is just a block from the Walls Unit, which houses the death chamber where, by state law, all executions in Texas must be carried out, but neither guard knew that another convict was scheduled to die later that night, "at any time," in the language of the statute, "before the hour of sunrise." Nor did the crowd at Zach's, a college hangout ten blocks away, where students from Sam Houston State University (known locally as

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university (the second largest business in town) is known nationally for its fine criminal justice center, which graduates hundreds of "CJ" majors every year. Like the prison guards, the students at Zach's didn't much care that a man was going to be executed in Huntsville that night, but a freshman [illegible] four escaped convict had taken a female student hostage a few weeks back. One bright-eyed CJ major named Kevin Pooler said that because two of his buddies had been murdered recently in Houston he had no qualms about capital punishment.

"Burn 'em, fry 'em!" shrugged Pooler, who said he hoped to become a prosecutor and then a Supreme Court justice. "So what if a few innocent people slip through. That's better than having a lot of guilty people on the street! If criminals start seeing people getting popped off after six months, I'm sorry, but that's going to change some minds."

The state of Texas apparently has taken its cue from citizens like Pooler. A poll conducted in 1992 by a group of Texas newspapers found that 79 percent of the state's citizens favor the death penalty. Since 1976, when the Supreme Court ruled the death penalty constitutional (thereby resurrecting execution in the United States after a four-year hiatus), seventy-two men have been executed in Huntsville—more than twice as many as in Florida, the next most productive state in the execution market, and more than three times as many as in Virginia and Louisiana, which rank third and fourth. In the last two years, the rate of Texas executions has more than tripled, and the seventeen men executed in 1993 alone constitute nearly a fourth of those executed in Texas.



At 9:00 P.M. I called Kelly's lawyers, who told me that his petition had been denied by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit and that a new appeal had just been faxed to the Supreme Court. This, I knew, meant that Kelly's chances for a stay of execution had all but vanished, but, as it so happened, I didn't see him die. The wire services and the Texas press had filled the five available places in the media pool—that pale reminder of the once madding crowd that for centuries has reveled in witnessing the grim administration of justice. Prison officials assured me, however, that I wouldn't have to wait long for my turn, what with twenty-four more executions scheduled in the next eight weeks. When the death penalty was reactivated here, the first executions were mobbed. Now they have become so commonplace that few turn out for them. Nonetheless, I decided to post myself outside the Walls Unit, which was cordoned off to keep out possible rabble-rousers, to see who might show up to mark Carl Kelly's death.

I WOULDN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG FOR MY TURN TO SEE AN EXECUTION, PRISON OFFICIALS ASSURED ME, WHAT WITH TWENTY-FOUR EXECUTIONS SCHEDULED IN THE NEXT EIGHT WEEKS

Built in 1849 and by the turn of the century decked out with tropical atrium gardens, turrets, porticoes, and a clock tower that the whole town told time by, Texas's aptly named oldest prison is now a faceless brick bunker flanked by forty-foot walls topped by razor wire. A lone guard manned the corner tower, beneath which a dozen anti-death-penalty demonstrators, known locally as Amnesty people because of the affiliation some of them have with Amnesty International, had gathered for their sober candlelight vigil. By 11:20 prison officials learned that the Supreme Court had unanimously denied Kelly a stay. Shortly before midnight the official witnesses filed inside the Walls to the polite din of the protesters' pots, pans, and wooden flutes. Suddenly, two pickups roared into the parking lot, spewing out drunken college students who launched into raucous, inebriated choruses of "You're on the highway to hell" and "So long, farewell, auf wiedersehen, fuck you."

"Get a life!" a young woman hollered at the Amnesty people as she drove by. "We're trying to save one!" one demonstrator responded meekly. When one of the students asked who was being killed and why, and how the protesters would feel had the inmate's victim been their mother, he was quickly regaled with anti-death-penalty statistics; Carl Kelly's case never came up.

At 12:27 A.M. the witnesses emerged from the Walls, reporting that Kelly had been pronounced dead at 12:22; that he had requested wild game for his last meal but instead was given hamburgers, water, and fries (which he didn't eat); and that his last words were, "I'm an African warrior, born to bleed, born to die." (The mother of one of Kelly's victims was not impressed when I read his final words to her over the phone. "Oh yeah,



ight," she said. "What about the rest of us? When heard he said that, any feelings I might have had for him just kinda snapped and I said, 'Okay, justice has been served.'")

Ask anyone in Huntsville and he or she vill tell you that the rapid clip of executions has bsolutely nothing to do with life there. "It's just ıot our issue," explained City Manager Gene Pipes. This is the state carrying out a legal mandate that ıas nothing to do with the local community. It hap- ens to be DATELINE, HUNTSVILLE, but it's just not hat's being talked about on the square."

Indeed, the morning after Kelly's execution ıere was no sign anywhere near the square that nything unusual had happened. The yellow ıpe outside the Walls was gone; across the street, ı their telltale white prison suits, trusties were ıowing the lawn and hosing down the family car t the TDC director's vast, neo-Georgian man- ion. At the Cafe Texan, the regular 9:30 coffee rowd of retired white ranchers and constables ıshed with a sassy veteran waitress and rehashed ld cowboy yarns, while black workers shoul- ered trays of steaming, clean dishware and ate ı the kitchen. At the Masonic Lodge coffee latch, a group of mostly older men (a TDC uard, a cook, a retired chaplain, an engineer, the county judge, the founder of the local John Birch Society, and a retired crime-scene photographer) took it upon themselves to explain that Huntsville had been called the Rome of Texas, built as it was on seven hills and seven creeks, as well as the Athens of Texas, because the state's first law school and teachers college were found- ed here. Huntsville's founders donated the land for the state penitentiary, confident that legisla- tors would then also locate the state capital there, but the Texas legislature, by one vote, chose Austin, and the disappointed Huntsville citi- zenry had to content itself with the eleven horse thieves who were the Walls' first reluctant guests.

Over the course of the next few weeks, while waiting my turn to witness an execution, I dis- covered that most of the people in town preferred to know as little as possible about Huntsville's main industry. "This is a marvelous place to raise a family," said Jane Monday, a former mayor and historian. "It's a university town, a town that cares a great deal about its young; it's warm, it's cozy, it's a very caring community. I wouldn't take a million dollars to live anywhere else." When I asked about the effect all of Huntsville's prisons and executions had on its young, Monday shook her head firm- ly. "It might sound funny to you, but I don't think it affects the children or the community at all."

Governor Jimmy Carter at first agreed. "[illegible] prison system," he said automatically. Asked why no one in Huntsville seemed [illegible] with executions or acknowledge that we are in[illegible]

Tommy Cole, a physician whose great-grandfather headed the TDC and whose family home has abutted the Walls for more than a century, admitted that he too is unaware of the executions. Dr. Cole likened himself to those living in small [illegible] death camps. "We just visited Weimar, a few miles outside of Buchenwald, and no one there had any idea what went on, just like we have no idea what goes on behind those walls over there," he volunteered over a scotch in his fuchsia-damasked living room, in which much of the elegantly carved antique furniture was made by prison labor.

The obliviousness of townspeople to the executions was notable, but more striking was the



way in which career TDC employees involved in the work managed to keep it from impinging on their consciousness. "It's real simple: I either do my [illegible] I don't eat," the assistant director for public information, Charles L. Brown, told me when I asked how he felt about witnessing every execution. "My position is purely defensible: if I'm going to have to answer questions about it, I ought to be there. It's got nothing to do with my feelings about the death penalty; I'm just doing my job professionally and to the best of my ability. It works perfect, in that regard. And nobody would know whether I'm for or against capital punishment. You'd be surprised." Brown added, "how many [illegible] Huntsville Central

McKee, a retired Walls Unit chaplain whose job it was to walk condemned men to the electric chair until the U.S. Supreme Court effectively placed a moratorium on executions in 1972. "It was hard to be there, but I didn't have to see it," he told me. "I closed my eyes . . . You know, the flesh burns—it leaves a terrible odor. I'd go home and take my clothes off, leave 'em out, we'd go to sleep. Next day, I had to send my clothes to the cleaners. It was just part of the job."

I asked Brother McKee how he felt about assisting the state in taking lives. He looked at me with watery blue eyes. "I've never said this before. I do not believe in capital punishment of any kind. My philosophy is this: we have no right to demean, diminish, or destroy a life. If they can't be rehabilitated, they should be incarcerated. But I was working in a system that says we're going to do it. It's not right for me to say how a man should die."

Chaplain McKee's successor, the Reverend Carroll L. Pickett, said that because the death penalty was in abeyance when he started to work at the Walls, he had no idea that walking men to their death would be among his responsibilities. His first walk into the death chamber was "extremely traumatic," he said, not least because the technique of killing by lethal injection had never been tried before. Over the years, Reverend Pickett has tried to make the process as humane as possible by devoting himself to comforting the condemned men and their families, honoring their final requests, and shortening the time each must lie strapped to the gurney before receiving his deadly dose.

I asked Reverend Pickett how he would feel if any of the men he escorted turned out to be innocent. He shook his head impatiently. "I can't deal in 'ifs,'" he said. "I don't look back at what the man did twelve years ago. I can't get involved in the legal stuff; I'm not a lawyer. My concern has to be the human being and what he needs that day."

The reverend may well be at peace about his role in the prison system, but physicians and rehabilitation specialists told me that TDC employees work under tremendously stressful and abusive conditions. Not only do many workers suffer from severe headaches, depression, and alcoholism; they also commonly inflict their pent-up aggression on their subordinates and spouses—many of whom suffer serious physical and emotional damage from this battering—and on their children, who in turn wreak havoc at school and are often rough with their peers. "It's pretty stressful," admitted Huntsville police detective David Collins, who quit his TDC job after four years spent guarding one of the toughest units at Ferguson, the prison for youthful offenders. "You see all kinds of garbage in there. A lot of [guards] let themselves get run over by the inmates; a lot can't take it and quit. Some of my family mem-

ers noticed a change in me, said I'd become more cynical."

Sharon, a prison guard in her late forties who declined to give her last name, works the morning shift on death row. "It's not just tough, it's very depressing," she said. "There are not too many people who can do this—who can walk in and see someone who you know has killed somebody or raped a child, who's not been out in the free world for ten or fifteen years. You have to get very callous, feeding a guy that spits in your face and says, 'Yeah, and I'd kill *your* mother too.'"

Because Texas has no public-defender system, most death-row inmates are forced to rely on woefully incompetent, court-appointed counsel, and the churning of court-imposed execution dates and inmates' frantic appeals has meant that a number of inmates without any legal representation have come within minutes of being executed. Four death-row inmates in the last four years were found to be innocent and were released; at least four more have presented to the courts compelling claims of innocence. But their pleadings have been dismissed repeatedly because Texas law requires an inmate to produce new evidence of his innocence within thirty days of his conviction—an impossibly short time for a newly condemned person to procure trial transcripts (just preparing these often takes the court as long as thirty days), hire a new lawyer to reinvestigate the case, and file a motion for a new trial.

The thirty-day rule was upheld last year by the U.S. Supreme Court, much to the horror of Justice Harry A. Blackmun, who in his dissent warned his colleagues that "the execution of a person who can show that he is innocent comes perilously close to simple murder."* The Court majority countered that those with technically inadmissible evidence can always fall back on executive clemency, "the 'fail-safe' in our criminal justice system." However, since 1976 not one appeal for clemency on the grounds of innocence has succeeded in Texas, where decisions are meted out by the governor and a parole board consisting of political appointees who follow no fixed set of procedures, are reluctant to reconsider, mess the courts, and are accountable to no one.

As in many other death-penalty states, the dispensation of capital punishment in Texas is also tinged with racism. The disproportionate number of blacks on death row suggests that discriminatory practices continue to infect the state's police work, jury trials, and capital sentencing. Civil-rights groups have grown increasingly vocal on this issue. Meanwhile, violent crime continues, and frustrated white citizens, politicians, and law-enforcement officials have organized a slew of victims' rights groups that furiously condemn defense attorneys' "frivolous delaying tactics" and call for "justice now."

The debate and the high-stakes legal gambits for inmates' lives take place mostly in Austin, where a politically ambitious attorney general and a conservative legislature seem intent on maintaining and even expanding the death penalty; in Houston, which has the fourth-highest homicide rate of the nation's largest cities and thus has had seven times as many men executed as any other Texas jurisdiction; and as far away as Washington, where national anti-crime sentiment has inspired President Clinton to dream up fifty ways to expand the death penalty and the Supreme Court to progressively narrow death-row inmates' access to the federal courts.

A LOCAL DOCTOR LIKENED HIMSELF TO THOSE LIVING IN SMALL TOWNS OUTSIDE OF NAZI DEATH CAMPS: "NO ONE THERE HAD ANY IDEA WHAT WENT ON, JUST LIKE WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT GOES ON BEHIND THOSE WALLS"

But the eye of this storm is Huntsville, where the convicted killers wait. Life on "the row" has little to recommend it. Prisoners can choose to lift weights, work in the death-row garment factory, or pursue their appeals. Visitation rights are limited; the inmates are separated from all "free world" beings by bars and a narrow panel of thick glass laced with wire mesh. Those deemed security risks are chained inside metal cages when entertaining guests.

"Death row is the loneliest place in the

*After a career of affirming the death penalty, Justice Blackmun recently concluded that capital punishment is not constitutional as it is currently applied in Texas and other states, in large measure because he now truly believes that innocent men have in fact been executed. In February he dissented from an unsigned Supreme Court order denying review of yet another Texas death-penalty case. Blackmun concluded that "the death penalty experiment has failed." "Perhaps," he wrote, "one day this Court will develop procedural rules or verbal formulas that actually will provide consistency, fairness, and reliability in a capital-sentencing scheme. I am not optimistic that such a day will come. I am more optimistic, though, that this Court eventually will conclude that the effort to eliminate arbitrariness while preserving fairness 'in the affliction of (death) is so plainly doomed to failure that it and the death penalty must be abandoned altogether.' (Godfrey v. Georgia, 1980 . . .) I may not live to see that day, but I have faith that eventually it will arrive. The path the Court has chosen lessens us all. I dissent."

ON NOVEMBER 9, I LEARNED THAT MY TURN HAD COME. I WOULD WATCH EXECUTION THAT NIGHT OF ANTHONY COOK, A MURDERER WHO HAD WAIVED HIS RIGHT OF APPEAL AND WAS READY TO DIE



those executed in their town are guilty. "If they were innocent, it would've been found out way back then," insisted Diamond Kornegay, a retiree who, like many of Huntsville's relative newcomers, fled crime-ridden Houston for a peaceful life in the country. "Just look at all these lawyers, all these witnesses and everything!" Diamond, a chatty lady whose "daddy" was a cotton farmer and who grew up close to Huntsville, said the executions never bothered her.

"It's not a big deal to me. When I was a little bitty girl, they used to open up the Walls and take the schoolchildren through there. I saw the electric chair, but I never did think about it; I just put that out of my mind. If anyone ended up getting killed, well, they just did a bad thing, and that's the law."

It wasn't hard to see how such attitudes have been forged. Each morning, shrill whistles at 6:00 A.M., 7:00 A.M. and noon (denoting times for head-counting, work detail, and more head-counting) make it impossible for those within earshot to forget that their neighbor is a bureaucracy run on involuntary labor. The reminders continue all day long: trusties in their prison whites performing menial tasks, the changing of the guards in gray, prison vans trucking manacled inmates from unit to unit, and the startling profusion of wisecracking sheriffs and wardens who gather from all over Texas for seminars at Sam's prestigious Criminal Justice Institute and who stroll through town resplendent in starched jeans, smart cowboy hats, boots, and huge silver belt buckles.

Each weekday between 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M., convicts from all over Texas are released at the Walls. For years their first stop was usually Bustin' Loose, a clothing store one block from the prison, where they could cash their release checks and pick up new clothes. But the state recently cut the stipend from $200 to $100, and since most new ex-cons are less willing to blow their few bucks, last fall the owners of Bustin' Loose were forced to close shop. But before they did, I met a burglar and a dope dealer there; both were in their twenties and both had trained to be bricklayers while inside (though neither seemed particularly interested in laying bricks now that he was free). By early afternoon both men, sporting new T-shirts and shorts, were stumbling down Twelfth Street, stone drunk.

Most ex-cons hightail it out of Huntsville within hours of being released, using the Greyhound vouchers the prison provides in their release packets. During my weeks in Huntsville I would occasionally stop by the Greyhound station to chat with the men as they waited for

Is. And the hard-

such talk from convicted murderers. Bower, how-

suspects. Because of the thirty-day rule, however, no Texas court has agreed to hear his story.

Bower believes he was framed by corrupt law-enforcement officials allegedly involved in drug transactions with at least one of the murder victims. All of the evidence gathered against Bower was circumstantial; potentially exculpatory evidence mysteriously disappeared before the trial. Although within days of his conviction witnesses began coming forward with new evidence supporting Bower's innocence, his lawyer, off on a Mexican vacation, failed to

deadline. Bower's harrowing trial expe-

decade spent studying the cases of his

row, has persuaded

Texas's sometimes

heir buses to Houston or Dallas, Lubbock, Beaumont, or Port Arthur. Most of them were repeat offenders; almost all were Hispanic and black. An immensely unlikable murderer with a gold necklace and twisted grimace who had served only four years practically spat at me as he assured me that he had paid his debt to society. One, a large, drunken, white-haired black man, became quite chummy. He told me his name was Mr. Bum, or Mr. Wannabe, that he was "a bona fide Christian," that "prison is hell, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and don't let anybody tell you anything different," and that I was his kind of woman, baby. When he shook my hand good-bye, he tried to steal my ring.

On November 9, I learned that my turn had come and that I had been assigned to the media pool for the execution that night of Anthony Cook, a white thirty-two-year-old construction worker from nearby Crockett who had abducted and murdered a University of Texas law student in 1988. Cook was what is known in the trade as "a volunteer," meaning that he had waived his right to appeal and was ready to submit to his sentence, and it was a pretty sure bet that his execution would proceed on schedule. Until the last minute, attorney Elizabeth Cohen from the federally funded Texas Resource Center tried to persuade Cook to change his mind, but he was not to be swayed. Cook believed that he'd been saved by the Lord Jesus back in 1991 and that he was headed straight for the right hand of God.

Cook spent his last day with his family, who Cohen said were "not happy" about his decision and were "having a really hard time." At 4:00 P.M. he was moved to the Walls' holding cell, and after his double-meat-and-bacon cheeseburger, strawberry shake, and shower, he and Cohen sat within yards of the death chamber and talked about God.

"He's doing great, he can't wait," Cohen reported to me afterward. "He has no interest in changing his mind; he has more interest in bringing me to Christianity. He keeps praying for me, and he looks at me with tears in his eyes because I'm not saved." After Cohen left, Cook visited with his closest spiritual advisers, Baptist volunteer chaplains Jack and Irene Wilcox, who later told me Cook begged them to "follow up on" Cohen's conversion after his death.

Jack Wilcox had nothing but enthusiasm for the force of Cook's conversion. "We walk into the death house, and he says to me, 'Hey, Jack, I'm excited!' Two hours before he's going to die and he's excited! I say, 'Fantastic! That's great!'. . . This man saw prison five times, he committed a horrible kidnapping and murder . . . a sure loser!" exclaimed Jack, who himself had found the Lord after a life on the streets. "And then three years later, you be lookin' at a person prayin' to God."

"We would have liked to have seen him continue with his appeals, because he was a great witness," Irene interrupted, "but he believed in the death penalty."



Jack jumped back in, impatient. "It's not for us to say. A lot of the men [on the row] are upset because he gave up his appeals. I say, 'Look, the man's been prayin' to God for two years—you don't get between a man and his prayers.' We wanna let God drive the car," he explained, and then asked whether I had yet let the Lord Jesus into my heart.

The evening of Cook's execution I attended a City Council meeting where neither the mayor, city manager, city councilmen, student body president, nor student-newspaper editor had any idea that Tony Cook had accepted with pleasure the state's invitation to be put to death later that night. Everyone came in talking about the day's big news: the Huntsville Hornets' star football coach was retiring after nineteen years. The main item on the City Council's agenda that evening was a hotly contested bid by Sam students and five bar owners to get drinking hours extended from midnight until 1:00 A.M. on weekdays and from 1:00 to 2:00 A.M. on Saturdays. The initiative lost by a wide margin—and not surprisingly: Huntsville is heavily Baptist and was dry until 1971. The

[redacted] election (though only a few hundred Sam stu-[redacted]

But I was thinking about that evening's exe-cution. I'd never even seen anyone die, and here [redacted] it without objection. Already I felt sullied, voyeuristic. Yet this is the law, I told myself. What's more, this one should be easy: this man *wants* to die. And he did pump four bullets into that poor law student's head. I kept up this inte-

THE WARDEN GAVE A SHARP NOD TOWARD THE PERSON OR PERSONS BEHIND THE MIRROR. THIS WAS THE SIGNAL TO EXECUTE COOK. WE ALL STOOD RIGID, FROZEN. THE SILENCE WAS ABSOLUTE

rior debate until it was time to report in at the TDC "Admin" building, just across from the [redacted]. I picked [redacted] at the Dairy Queen and hurried through the foggy chill to the triple set of doors.

Several reporters had already gathered in the [redacted] Information Office. Two were chatting with assistant information director Brown about other executions they had attended; another, like me a first-time witness, was earnestly jotting down facts from his "Execution Information" briefing packet. Cook had requested no personal witnesses at his death, Brown told us; the family would not claim the body, which meant that Cook would be buried at state expense in the Colonel Joe Byrd Cemetery, named for the late assistant warden who not only supervised every execution from 1949 until his death in 1964 but also took it upon himself to tend the dead men's graves.

The phone rang at 11:56. Brown answered. "That's quick; they're ready to go," he said, getting up from his desk. We walked across the street to the Walls, some of us chatting, barely aware of a couple of protesters almost invisible in the fog. The Walls' handsome old clock face read 10:02. I wondered how many men had died inside the Walls since its clock last told the correct time.

Once we were inside the gates, an assistant warden led us across an interior courtyard with locked chain-link fences, down white corridors with white-tile floors, through one thick gray door after another, each opened with an enormous brass key. Brown was amazed by the different style of the new warden, Morris Jones, who was presiding tonight over his first execution. "I tell ya, this Jones, he's a new kind: quick, quick," he said. "No point in waiting, I guess."

We then were marched single file to the death [redacted]. I [redacted] fearful look in my eyes. She told me that she couldn't sleep for three nights after her first exe-cution. "Just attend to the business at hand," she advised. As we sat waiting to be admitted into the witness room, Reverend Pickett walked Cook the dozen-odd steps from his tiny holding cell with its bright orange bars, past a shower and toilet, and in to the antiseptic death chamber, where he would be strapped down onto the chrome gurney while the warden and reverend stood by. I asked public information officer David Nunnelee whether it made any difference to him when the men whose death he witnessed were volunteers.

"I appreciate that they accept what they did and want to pay the penalty," he said, without hesitation. "You gotta respect that."

Defense attorney Owen subsequently disparaged this view. "Actually, Cook was the perfectly rehabilitated prisoner," Owen said, then mused about the fine theological line between the insanity plea of an inmate who claims to hear voices, and is therefore not competent to be executed, and a volunteer such as Cook, whose execution was expedited because he had heard the voice of Jesus promising him a heavenly escape from death row.

We got our signal and were abruptly herded in to the carpeted witness room, along with two large wardens in khaki jackets and a small dark man in an even darker suit, who, I was told, was the one assistant attorney general who never talked to the press. We stood behind bars and a pane of thick glass, which separated us from the actual death chamber.

The view was stunning. Cook lay spread-eagled on the gurney, ready, bound by six thick leather straps. Although the press briefing listed his height as only five foot six, he looked enormous. His eyes were only partly open; his strong chin pointed upward. He was balding, and his longish auburn hair looked blond beneath the chilling fluorescent light. Ace bandages covered both hands and IVs were inserted into both forearms, his thin, short-sleeved prison shirt revealing a blurry tattoo. He wore blue, standard-issue prison garb and his own Etonic sneakers, purchased, I later learned, in the prison commissary for $21.75.

Near Cook's head stood Warden Jones; near Cook's feet stood Reverend Pickett, his hands folded. Suddenly I saw movement in front of me and realized that on Cook's far side was a one-way mirror in which we all were reflected. It was our own movement, not that of the symmetrical threesome in the death chamber itself, that had been captured in the glass. The effect was eerie: not only would I witness an execution but I would witness myself witnessing it. Behind the mirror

n an adjacent room, stood the executioner whether man or woman, or more than one, no one would tell me), who would, upon a signal rom the warden, activate the death device and ntroduce into Cook's veins the $71.50 fix consisting of what prison officials term "those substances necessary to cause death": sodium hiopental, which is the lethal component, panuronium bromide, to relax and anesthetize, and otassium chloride, to stop the heartbeat.

"Do you have anything to say?" the warden nuttered at 12:08. Cook opened his eyes.

"Yessir," he said, speaking into a big black microphone hung just over his head. "I just want to ell my family that I love them and I thank the ord Jesus for giving me another chance and for aving me."

With that, Cook shut his eyes. The warden ave a small, sharp nod toward the person or persons behind the mirror. We all stood rigid, frozen. The silence was absolute, a perfect vacuum. Within seconds Cook took a sudden deep breath, agged once, and stiffened his chin upward, all in one gesture. His chest expanded tremendously when he breathed, as if he had eagerly inhaled his own death. His arms were still outstretched and bound; his mouth and eyes were slightly open; nothing else moved.

My eyes slowly traced the contours of his body—the ninety degrees from his shiny bald crown to the end of his outstretched left arm, down the length of his pants leg, across the white sneakers, and up the near side—searching for signs of life, a cough, a twitch, a moan, a second thought. None came. I waited for him to exhale. But the air he had so urgently seized a moment before remained trapped in Cook's chest. The show was over; the passage from life to death was horrifyingly invisible, a silent and efficient erasure.

We waited. Finally, the warden called in Dr. Darrell Wells, a bearded emergency-room physician who attends most of the prison's executions. Wells checked Cook's eyes with a flashlight and his heart with a stethoscope. The play had ended. At 12:15, within five minutes of Anthony Cook's last gasp, the doctor pronounced him dead.

We filed out the way we came, more quickly this time, with little conversation. When I reached the Public Information Office, one of the reporters was already calling his bureau.

"Hi, Harry. He's history," he greeted his editor. Another reporter filed his story by modem while Press officer Brown invited us all to the opening of a new 2,250-bed prison later that morning.

"Cold, ain't it?" a thin young guard greeted me as I walked back to my car. The clock at the Walls still read 10:02. A yellow traffic light flashed in front of the closed, eternally lit Dairy Queen. Cook's death made the 1:00 A.M. news on CNN, flickering in the nation's consciousness but an instant.

By 7:30 that morning at the Huntsville Funeral Home (which handles the bodies of all executed men), Tony Cook's mother, stepfather, brother, sister, assorted in-laws, cousins, and the Wilcoxes were paying their last respects to his open casket. Cook looked smaller than he had on the gurney; he had pretty, long eyelashes and delicate hands, a slightly cleft chin, and the shadow of a beard. He was dressed now in a blue oxford shirt with white stripes, and his mother stood over him, gently caressing his thin hair, his cheek, his ear. "He feels like you could just squeeze him back to life," she said. He had called her two hours before his death to tell her how excited he was about dying. "He certainly was at peace with himself," she said.

"No more cages," sighed his sister as she touched her brother's chest, arms, face. "He's free, free, free!" She clutched his hand again and again, then finally kissed his forehead good-bye. I tried to fathom what it must feel like, after five years of no physical contact, to be allowed to touch a son or brother only after he is dead.

We followed the hearse through town to the muddy cemetery, where the six inmates who had prepared the grave were warming themselves over an ashcan fire. The seventeen family members clustered together, held one another, and cried,



[illegible] said he'd never heard Tony say a bad [illegible] anybody and read us a statement that [illegible] had written for the occasion: "Someday [illegible]

After the service Chaplain Wilcox pointed to one of the hundreds of crosses in the cemetery. "That's one of Tony's best friends, right there," he said. Since the markers have only prison numbers and no names, I asked how he knew. "I buried him," he said. "Last June." I later asked Reverend Pickett why the crosses have no names.

"It makes it more accurate," he told me. "We have many at the prison with the same name. There'll be another Tony Cook, but there'll never be another number like that number."

The air was dank and cold as I drove out of town, and I hoped the day's sharp rawness would clear my numbed senses. I headed north out to farm route 980, past sallow fields, unkempt trailer clusters, and the occasional satellite dish. Suddenly I saw, strung from a ragged barbed-wire fence, what looked like a wild dog or wolf, hanging upside down by its right rear foot. Its tail was splayed in a lazy S; its other legs were beautifully poised as if the animal had been caught in mid-leap by a photographer's lens.

I sped by, stopped, then backed up to make sure I wasn't hallucinating. The animal had been shot in the right shoulder, and bloody organs were dribbling out. So far only a single fly had discovered the catch; long-tailed, white-bellied birds took no notice as they hopped along the fence and pecked at the unmowed field.

Like somebody's trophy, the animal hung there, far more dignified than its surroundings. It was a coyote, I was later told, a predator. Nothing to feel sorry for, in other words: all crossbreeds were coyotes out here, and they ate the calves and young deer. It was hung there "as a warning to other coyotes," said one veteran hunter; another suggested it was hung "to let other farmers know they're doin' their part" in keeping the coyote population down. "That's just kinda the old way here in Texas," a former state game warden told me. Another old-timer, a man who'd mounted the rear end of a deer on the wall of his tiny living room wall, gave one more reason: "Somebody wants to show off that he killed somethin'," he said, then broke into a toothless grin.

All these explanations somehow made sense. But I wondered why I was so transfixed by this roadside display of a predator's comeuppance. Something about the crude, fresh death jarred [illegible] in a way that Cook's execution had not. That [illegible] its choreography had anesthetized me to the reality that a man was being killed before my eyes. But the flesh and blood of this handsome dripping creature made both its death and its outlaw status immediately palpable.

From what I'd read about the stench of electrocution and the vividness of public hangings, I imagined that witnessing deaths by these means would have an immediacy that would preclude numbness. The lethal-injection method, first used in Texas in 1982 and now adopted by most death-penalty states as more humane, has turned dying into a still life, thereby enabling the state to kill without anyone involved feeling anything at all.

I wondered how viewing such a non-event could satisfy the desire for retribution so often expressed by death-penalty advocates and the families of victims. I wondered whether Huntsville's sterile, bloodless executions of the last twelve years might partly account for residents' wholesale disinterest and denial that what went on deep inside the Walls might have anything to do with them.

But it's not just here in Huntsville; we are all inured to such smooth exterminations. Any remaining glimmers of doubt—about whether the man received due process, about his guilt, about our right to take a life—cause us to rationalize these deaths with such catchwords as "heinous," "deserved," "deterrent," "justice," and "painless." We have perfected the art of institutional killing to the degree that it has deadened our natural, quintessentially human response to [illegible] death.

When I returned to [illegible] a student [illegible] was waiting at my hotel to let me know how upset he and his colleagues were by the City Council's refusal to extend legal drinking hours. Outside my window, Sam cheerleaders feverishly waved their pink banners in practice for Saturday's game. A TDC official phoned to tell me not to bother to show up the following night for Dorsie Johnson's execution: he'd just gotten a stay until January.

Feeling hungry, I decided to check out Mac's Hamburger, Huntsville's original fast-food shack which since it went up in the Fifties has stood a block west of the Walls. A now-faded sandwich board out front reads, TRY OUR KILLER BURGERS.

So I tried one: "Double meat, double cheese, lettuce, tomato, mustard, mayonnaise, pickles and jalapeños," explained Willie Mae Jenkins, a pretty short-order cook with a monogrammed gold tooth who has been serving up Killer and Just Killer Burgers for eighteen years.

"So why's it called a Killer Burger?" I asked.

Willie Mae smiled, apparently surprised by the question and a little embarrassed at not having a ready answer. "I really don't know," she said. "I think it has something to do with the jalapeños."

ON THE EXAMINING TABLE

A patient's wary encounter with managed health care

By Vince Passaro

I am not the most wizened veteran of the institutional side of middle-class American life, but even I know enough to run for cover whenever I come across the words "in order to serve you better." The phrase apparently derives from America's conviction that all change is improvement, and it represents an impulse that has systematically removed civility, dignity, and grace from much of our public life. These are the words that herald news of higher life-insurance premiums or function as the opening gambit of letters from your bank informing you that your fees are rising, your interest is shrinking, and your loan accounts are being handed off to a subsidiary from hell ("It is important that we speak with you. If you have a Touch-Tone phone . . .").

Having brought to rubble the ethos of service in such dominions of aggravation as the postal service, the schools, the banks, the supermarkets, and, perhaps, the company you work for, those who would "serve you better" have, as we all know, turned their attention to health care. As with all the other sectors of daily middle-class life made nearly unbearable by bureaucratic obstruction, health care has come before the eyes of the improvers for a very familiar reason: the quest for hard cash. The insurance companies' effort to make more money at your expense relies on the concept of "managed health care," which has become the mantra of the health-care pundits and the ostensible salvation of a system that, despite being irrefutably the best in the world, is considered, largely because of its expense, to be in "crisis."* The phrase "managed care" is as thin a verbal fig leaf as "to serve you better." Look it up in your glossary of contemporary survival and you'll find its true definition: restricted care.



Last summer my wife and I, with the timing of synchronized swimmers, plunged together into the world of managed care. My wife works for Time Warner, which, as of last August 1, switched its employees' coverage to a managed-care program called PruCare, under the direction of Prudential Insurance. In July, it so happened, I had taken a new job as an academic administrator and so, as of August 1, found myself joining one of the cheaper available HMOs, called HIP of Greater New York, which I had signed up for in the mistaken belief that I was required to sign

Vince Passaro's fiction and criticism have appeared in Esquire, *the* New York Times, *and* Newsday. *His last piece for* Harper's Magazine, *"Funds for the Enfeebled: The NEA Wrangle," appeared in the December 1990 issue. He is the director of communications at Adelphi University and is at work on a novel.*

*The notion that our health-care system is too expensive goes universally unchallenged. America's percentage of GDP spent on health care—14 percent—is usually contrasted unfavorably with that of other First World countries, such as Germany and Japan. Then again, their systems are not as good as ours. And in the decade or so in which the issue has been debated, I have yet to see a bald exposition stating explicitly *for whom* American medical care is too expensive and for whom it is too cheap. Uninsured families certainly have borne the brunt of ruinous debt after the onset of catastrophic illness; but for the most part it is state and federal governments and insurance companies, particularly the latter, for whom our too expensive health-care system is too expensive.

Illustration by Barry Blitt

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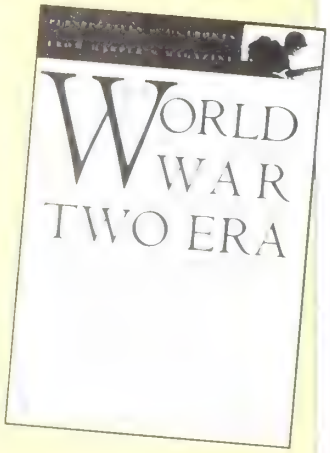
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THE WORLD WAR TWO ERA



Perspectives on all fronts from *Harper's Magazine*

Introduction by Paul Fussell

The third volume in the American Retrospective Series. This collection traces all [illegible] at the momentous decade between 1936 and 1946, with reports and [illegible] both the war- and home fronts: from the housewife-turned-shipyard [illegible] to the [illegible] German foot soldier; from the war correspondent under attack [illegible] to a soldier's rage at the second-class treatment he receives upon [illegible] war. Authors included are John Gunther, William Shirer, Margaret [illegible], J. B. Priestley, Frederick Lewis Allen, Bernard DeVoto, [illegible]

FRANKLIN SQUARE PRESS

A DIVISION OF HARPER'S MAGAZINE

up for some form of medical coverage, even though I was already covered under my wife's plan.

The PruCare plan would be our primary coverage, HIP our backup. At first, PruCare looked like a good deal. Our three children's pediatricians were in the program, as was our family doctor and our superb local pharmacy, where the staff knows us, knows our doctors, and is always quick and helpful. Instead of paying for office visits out of pocket, we would pay a large but reasonable copayment,* and even inoculations and well-child visits would be covered. At the pharmacy, we would pay $5 per prescription, regardless of the cost of the drug. My wife would now be paying a higher percentage of the overall cost of the policy, but, with a limit on her contributions of 1 1/4 percent of her salary, her fees were lower than those I was paying for our superfluous HIP coverage, and lower than those that most other companies these days extort from their employees.

Alas, even as we joined the program, Prudential was in the process of signing new contracts with its doctors and pharmacies. The first unhappy news arrived almost simultaneously with the start date: as of September 1, presumably having cut a better deal with Pathmark and Duane Reade (massive chains that no doubt promised some cut-rate prices in exchange for the captive market), PruCare would be dropping our pharmacy from its list, and many other mom-and-pop pharmacies like it. For us, living in the city, getting to the nearest Pathmark meant a twenty-minute bus ride out of our neighborhood, not an enticing prospect when we considered we might have sick children in tow. But PruCare, being a "managed" plan, was working from a rigid and surreal formula: it considered a pharmacy in an urban area

*The figure usually cited for these copayments is $5 or, at most, $10, but one of the privileges of living in New York City is the opportunity to pay more for everything. Our copayments were $15, which in the case of visits to the pediatrician for a fever or an ear infection, comes to twice what we would have paid after reimbursement from Blue Cross/Blue Shield our old plan. The savings on other things like prescriptions and visits to our internist probably compensated for this.

e "local" if it lay within two miles of ne's residence, perhaps a sensible dis- ince in the suburbs but absurd for city wellers.

Two or three weeks later we dis- overed that our pediatricians, and ossibly our family doctor, would be aving the program. Their new con- acts had arrived from PruCare, and hereas our doctors had once been aid various set fees for services pro- ided, they were now being moved to system known as "capitation." In his system the doctor receives a dol- r figure per month per patient en- olled in the plan, regardless of hether he or she sees that patient what amount of care that patient re- uires—on average, $12 to $14 per onth.

Capitation is the ultimate cost-con- ol device: no longer does the insur- nce company have to fear—heaven rbid!—that a patient is receiving oo much care; under capitation it oesn't matter what primary-care doc- rs do or don't do, for whatever their ction they won't be paid a dime ex- a. If they order up some tests or send patient to a specialist, the insurance ompany will have to pay more, but to meone else. Under this arrangement he doctor has an incentive to move atients through as quickly as possible, nd will tend to refer cases out rather han begin a prolonged diagnostic ef- rt. To discourage outside tests and re- rrals, the companies force doctors get permission by calling represen- tives who confirm or deny that the rocedure ordered is in keeping with heir companies' guidelines.

Even these rules, however, prove sufficient to the strictures of cost nanagement"—that is, some less an absolutely essential care might ll get through. The contract there- re provides additional "incentives" lossary definition: punishments) to ncourage doctors to minimize refer- ls and tests, putting quotas on such tivities; exceeding them can lead further reductions of those already ultry monthly fees.

Do these companies want us to how about these rules? Judging from e PruCare contract, I'd think not. he contract insists on strict secrecy: n no condition is the doctor to dis- ss the terms of the agreement with the patient, who, either singly or with his employer, pays for it.

Our pediatricians flatly refused to participate in the PruCare plan. Our family doctor amended the more egregious terms of the contract and waited to see if he would be allowed to negotiate.* If Time Warner had not left an option for employees to go outside of the network (paying a deductible and 30 percent of the tab), we would have been effectively blocked from consulting the doctors who had been serving us, quite well and at moderate cost, for years.

Meanwhile, over the Labor Day weekend, I made a first—and, it turned out, last—foray into my clinic-style HMO. I had a bronchial infection, I believed (I was right), and our family doctor was away, so I thought I'd give HIP a try. I called their emergency number and was told that one of their "doctors" would be calling me back. Several hours later one did. I described my symptoms, and he agreed that I probably had an infection and could do with an antibiotic. He would fax the weekend clinic, he told me, authorizing my visit.

AN INSANE-LOOKING GENTLEMAN WITH BLOODSHOT EYES ENTERED MY EXAMINING ROOM: HE WAS MY DOCTOR

Not long afterward I arrived at the clinic to find an abandoned-looking corridor with a check-in desk, behind which two men sat watching a tiny television. They waved me on. I stopped in the rest room. In one of the stalls a man was shouting, "The truth *will* come out. All the *lies*, all the *slan*der will be seen clearly in their falsehood. The truth will come out . . . *They* know it will. The truth will come . . ." Et cetera. He kept this up for as long as I was in the bathroom. If you live in New York, you know this guy. Down the corridor was the waiting room, with the usual institutional furniture and the usual waiting-room plastic plants. The nurse assistant beckoned me with bored hostility.

"Did you call the emergency help line?" she said. "You're gonna say you did, but I know you didn't."

I had called it, I told her. I told her the "doctor" had said he was faxing authorization for my visit to the clinic.

"I don't know what you're talking about," she said. "We don't have a fax."

"Fine," I said.

In the meantime, a shabby-looking older gentleman had come to stand in the open doorway and stare. I nodded at him. He just continued staring, straight into my eyes—one of those looks you associate with the insane.

The assistant asked me if I was taking any medications. She made a snide comment about one of my recent prescriptions. The man in the doorway disappeared, having said nothing. I was sent into a tiny room next door, the examining room, which contained a small desk on which rested only one item, a 1983 pharmaceuticals guide, and an examining table, on which the paper covering, soft and wrinkled, obviously hadn't been changed all day. The windows were frosty with dirt. The staring man entered: he was my doctor. I told him my symptoms; he nodded and approached me with his stethoscope. I began to remove my shirt. "You don't have to," he said. He reached into my shirt, dropped the stethoscope, fished it out again, and listened to one side of my chest. He moved with agonizing slowness. His eyes, I noticed now that we were tête-à-tête, were rather remarkably bloodshot. He wrote a prescription for a weak antibiotic, which was also the cheapest. I told him that this particular antibiotic had never worked when I'd had previous chest infections, and suggested another, far more costly. He just shook his head. I kept thinking of William Burroughs's Dr. Benway, the rummy incompetent

*If so, he will be on his own, and have little leverage. Under current antitrust law, doctors are not allowed to bargain collectively with an insurance company or anyone else. The Clinton Administration, as part of its sales pitch for its health-reform package, may allow doctors greater leeway.

I might just

T

is the hope of the future, not the least

universally available health care,
specifically, is proposed by the Clinton

pears that the Clinton health-care
revision before any legislation is
passed, either late this year or some-
time the next, but it seems clear that
any plan agreed upon by the assembled
managed care." The fundamental is-
provide health insurance to the near-
have it. This is a timely and even no-
ble idea, the only problem being how
to pay for it: the best, after all, costs
though they could never bring them-
selves to admit it, has been to devise

As a taxpayer and occasionally at-
tentive citizen, I have been hearing
that "the market

care," and so forth, in the belief that the best products and services will, [illegible] the cream and the shabbiest will fall by the wayside. Such [illegible] try, American banking, American newspapers, American broadcasting, and American electronics, all in miserable and degraded states. Now, howls the chorus of the free market, let's do it to our medical system.

Yet after my brief introduction to the managed-care system—and the vision it produced of a health-care industry run along the lines of the New York Department of Motor Vehicles—it strikes me that we are bringing the quality of life in America onto a par with that of other unproductive, bureaucracy-strangled, Third World countries, the lands where your money isn't yours and your vote doesn't count. As a distant observer of an administration that seems to have a few good intentions, I am baffled how such a noble idea (*"health coverage for every American that can never"*—pause for lump in throat—*"be taken away"*) could end up as a 1,364-page piece of essentially vicious legislation. One explanation is that the plan reveals a pervasive paradox in the philosophy of this presidency: the Clintons, *maman et père*, both believe fervently in the power of government to address intractable social problems; yet they are dealers of the first order, public allies and private friends of the bankers, the insurers, and the lawyers who run the show in places like Washington, D.C., and Little Rock, Arkansas—citizens who ask of government nothing more than lubricating legislation and correct addresses on the large checks it sends for services rendered. Like any of us when we're under the sway of profoundly contradictory impulses, the [illegible] believe these two inclinations can be unified and organized to work together. Thus we have one health-care plan for the price of two: it injects the government on a huge scale into what has been a private enterprise, and still preserves the economic stakes of the industry's major corporate players.

THE BEST DOCTORS WILL SCRAMBLE LIKE FIFTH AVENUE JEWELERS AND HOTELIERS IN EXCLUSIVE SERVICE TO THE RICH

The Clintons' health-care plan depends upon a vastly complicated arrangement that includes a National Health Board, which would determine expenditures for medical services and insurance, and large, quasi-governmental, utterly monopolistic regional "alliances," empowered by the states to set doctors' fees and to purchase insurance policies and distribute them, no doubt wisely, to the people, via their employers if they are employed or else directly. These alliances supposedly will create buying groups large enough to justify reduced rates and spread liabilities, sidestepping the insurance companies' twin habits of charging higher and higher rates as they provide less service and of refusing to insure high-risk individuals, commonly going so far as to drop those who become sick.

The Clinton plan promises to provide these plans to citizens at reasonable rates and to offer discounts to the small businesses that can't afford to pay the mandated 80 per cent of insurance costs for their workers, which means that the government must subsidize the process to an as-yet undetermined degree, and that the insurance will have to be bought as cheaply as possible.

Another of the vague phrases that the Clintonites keep tossing up in explanation of the imperatives of the plan, presumably as an appeal to populist sentiment, is what they call the [illegible] "two-tiered health care system." Thus they distinguish (and polarize) the two types of coverage now available: fee-for-service care from private doctors, such as my wife and I once enjoyed; and managed care, provided either by private doctors under strict insurance-company control or by insurance-company-owned, clinic-style HMOs. The desire to do away with such a two-tiered system sounds nice, but it would force almost every American, including the regularly voting middle and professional classes, into

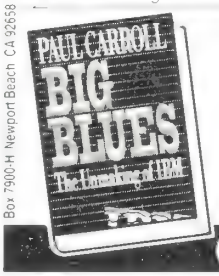
ow-quality modes of health care, leav-
g the best doctors to scramble like
ifth Avenue jewelers and hoteliers in
xclusive service to the rich, who will
ot find themselves popping down to
ne HMO clinic for their doctoring, at
ast not any time soon.' Although it
profoundly unfair, as well as socially
estructive, to keep a huge block of
ne American population out of the
ealth-care system entirely, as we do
ow, it doesn't necessarily follow that
is wrong to allow prosperous people
obtain *better* care, if they can find it.
o remove this possibility is to govern
nder the theory that if everyone can't
ave it, no one can—or, to put it an-
ther way, the worst possible care for
ne most possible people.

By way of calming the suspicions of
ne professional classes, the adminis-
ation and its spokespersons have paid
omage to the concept of "choice" in
s proposed health plan—that is, the
ntrammeled opportunity, if one so de-
res, to select, at a higher (but still rea-
on.ble) cost, the kind of health
nsurance that nearly half of all Amer-
an workers currently choose: wide-
pen, fee-for-service coverage in the
lue Cross/Blue Shield mode. In fact,
owever, the proposed litigation bris-
es with razory spines subverting that
noice. The regional alliances, from
hom almost all individuals and em-
overs *must* buy their insurance, will be
equired to offer such fee-for-service
overage, yet they are likely to be ham-
ered in doing so by the cost limits
nposed on them by the seven
nonymous presidential appointees
ho constitute the National Health
oard. Moreover, the alliances will face
rict limits on their overall expendi-
ures for insurance and be limited by
ne disparity between an average plan's
ost and that of a premium plan, the
tter generally not to exceed the for-
er by more than 20 percent. In
owded, expensive urban areas, this
icey coverage will be the first to go.
nd as what little waste now in the

n the spirit of Lear's Fool, Representative
'ete" Stark has suggested a rule requiring
at legislators and administration em-
'wees be covered under any new na-
onal health plan by the cheapest
ailable source of insurance. No one will
more surprised than Stark if this idea is
opted.

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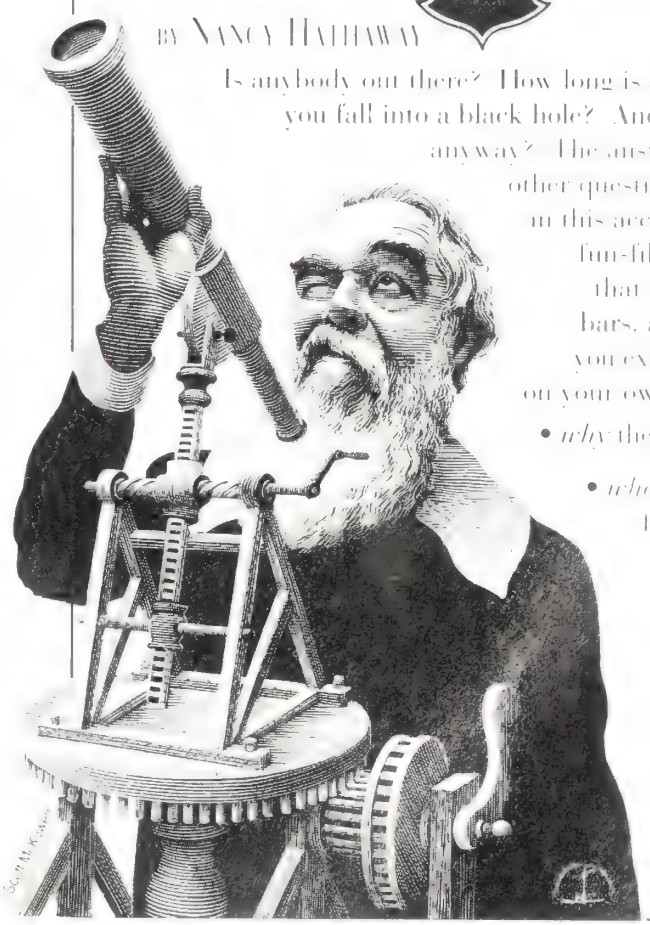
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BY NANCY HATHAWAY

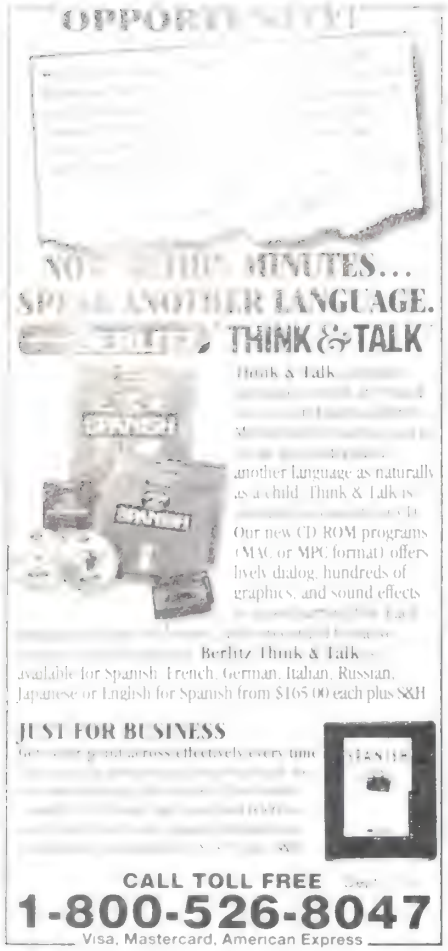
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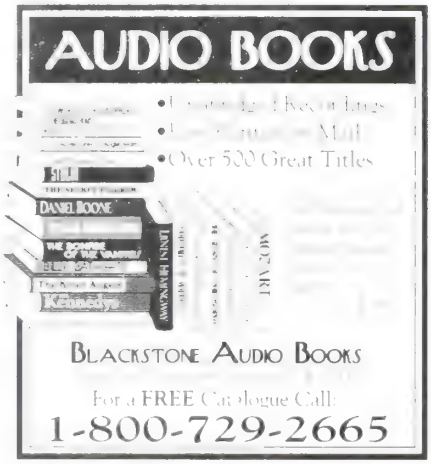
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system is eliminated, the only way
save money will be to herd greate
numbers of people into the cheape
available plans.

Although it has been often an
loudly said that Hillary Rodham Clin
ton has "taken on" the insurance in
dustry, the administration's propos
has been as friendly as possible to in
surers, not least by refusing to cut ou
entirely their highly extraneous portio
of the health-care dollar. In the late fa
of 1993, aware that people were ob
jecting to the plan's reliance on th
insurance companies, Mrs. Clinto
made a speech in which, no doub
happily for administration advanc
men and spin-flaks, she expressed h
anger and hostility to the insurer
Meanwhile, on Wall Street, health
care stocks continued to rise.

The administration proposal hel
insurers in two ways. Although th
Clinton plan does apparently call f
restrictions on insurance premium
it opens the door for 38 million pe
ple to have policies who now don
subsidized by consumers, other insur
people, and taxpayers—that is, th
rest of us. It also encourages an eno
mous and far-reaching reorganizati
of the health-care industry in whi
decision-making power and poli
move out of the hands of doctors ar
into the hands of insurers, who will
doubt press on with their own bo
tom-line interests first.

The other large aspect of the pl
that gives one pause is the constituti
of the regulating agencies known
the National Health Board and th
regional health alliances. The exa
positioning and interrelationships
these agencies is still to be argued ov
but I am troubled not by how the c
ganizational chart will read but rath
by the notion that we need yet a
other form of government that b
passes the electoral process and tur
executive power over to anonymo
appointees. This precedent is not
happy one. Utilities, public housi
urban planning, the environment, e
ucation, transportation—in my stat
New York, all are controlled by u
elected bodies variously called co
missions, authorities, boards, a
development corporations. In so
instances, these "report" to the gov
nor; in others, to the legislature. O



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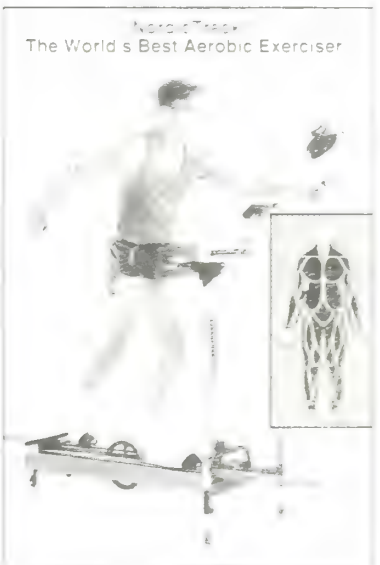


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Clinton proposal aim to do is largely eliminate private practice by doctors. The way around the grinding schedule of the doctor outlined above lies in joining with other doctors in a kind of semi-clinic situation, sharing costs for equipment, overhead, and staff, and cooperating in full with insurance-company mandates. Even that may be too much independence for the managed-care world. According to Dr. Kohn, an even more frightening trend has emerged: "By forcing primary-care doctors out of private practice through impossibly low fixed-payment rates, the insurance companies have cleared the way to hire new doctors to come in and work for them. Now, in Sacramento, not only do the insurance companies control the patients; they employ the doctors who care for these people."

Enter the world of the doctor as clerk, laboring on behalf of the insurance company's stockholders.

In February, during the worst winter in memory in New York City, by chance one day I passed by my old HIP clinic after a big snowstorm. Cars lay askew along the avenue, wedged into the snow, charcoal boulders piled high by the plows. The HIP windows above were still crusty with dirt, in color and texture looking much like the snow in the streets; I suppose one wouldn't want see-through windows in examining rooms, and I suppose further that if cost management is the name of the game, there's no cheaper shading than filth. Although I'd quit the place, I could not help but remember a newspaper story that quoted the chief executive of the operation as saying that if the Clinton plan went through, "New York is mine," presumably because his company's medical care fits exactly the model that the administration is offering.

Not far along, walking uptown, I passed a decrepit-looking fellow who seemed to have just finished decorating a building wall with some personal fluids. "Hey," he yelled out, "do you want to give fucking $10,000 to a homeless guy with AIDS?"

"No," I said, moving on.

"Not *cash*," he yelled at my back. "You can write a check."

I couldn't shake the thought, walking on, that as bad as HIP is, it's a hell of a lot better than this man has been given, and that the majority of the unseen "managed-care" patients sitting disconsolately behind the dirty windows in the bleak HIP examining rooms will probably get adequate, but just adequate, care. If a health-care bill is passed, even a decent one, the lot of the homeless man on the street should improve; and for those patients waiting upstairs, it will remain about the same. But for the rest of us, who once had access to good medicine, things will get worse, as they always seem to do, because of the evident justice of bringing the fortunate down to the level of those who are less so. Perhaps democracy requires this, but for me it is rather more an example of the new medievalism in which only the very rich are exempted from shabbiness.

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ZANDUCE AT SECOND

By Ron Carlson

By his thirty-third birthday, a gray May day that found him having a warm cup of spice tea on the terrace of the Bayside Inn in Annapolis, Maryland, with Carol Ann Fenager, a nineteen-year-old woman he had hired out of the Bethesda Hilton turntable Lounge at eleven o'clock that morning, Eddie Zanduce had killed eleven people and had a reputation for it, was famous, actually, for killing people, was, really, the most famous killer of the day, his photograph in the sports section of the paper every week or so, and somewhere in the article appeared the phrase "eleven people," or "eleven fatalities"—in fact, the word "eleven" now had that association first, the number of the dead. In all the major-league baseball parks his full name could be heard every game day in some comment, the gist of which would be, "Popcorn and beer for $10.50, that's bad, but just be glad Eddie Zanduce isn't here 'cause he'd kill you for sure," and the vendors would slide the beer across the counter and say, "Watch out for Eddie!" which had come to supplant "Here ya go!" or "Have a nice day!" in conversations even away from the parks. Everywhere he was that famous.



Even this young woman, who has been working out of the Hilton for the past eight months not reading the papers and watching only as much TV as one might watch in rented rooms in the early afternoon or late evening, even she knows his name, though she can't remember why she knows it until she finally asks him, "Eddie Zanduce?" her brow a furrow. "Are you on television? An actor?" And he smiles, raising the room-service teacup, but it's not a real smile. It is the placeholder expression he's been using for four years now, since he first hit a baseball into the stands and it struck and killed a college sophomore, a young man, the papers were quick to point out, who was a straight-A student majoring in chemistry, and it is the kind of smile that makes him look nothing but old, a person who has seen it all and is now waiting for it all to be over. And in his old man's way he is patient through the next part, a talk he has had with many people all around the country, letting them know that he is simply Eddie Zanduce, the third baseman for the Orioles who has killed several people with foul balls. It has been a pernicious series of accidents, really, though he won't say that.

She already knows she's not there for sex. After an hour she can tell by the manner, the face, and he has a beautiful actor's face that has been stunned with a kind of ruin by his bad luck and the weight of bearing responsibility for what he has done as an athlete. He's in the second thousand afternoons of this new life, and the loneliness seems to have a physical gravity; he's hired her because it would have been impossible not to. He's hired

Ron Carlson is the author of two collections of short stories, The News of the World *and* Plan B for the Middle Class. *His last story for* Harper's Magazine, *"A Note on the Type," appeared in the October 1993 issue.*

Illustration by Mark Ulriksen

Henry James's Tribute to a City's Timeless Spirit



You care for the terrible town, yea even for the horrible," as I have overheard you call it, or at least think it, when you supposed no one would know. . . you are ready to follow its hypothetic lance even to the mainland and to the very end of its tether."

In *New York Revisited*, first published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1906, Henry James observes turn-of-the-century New York in vivid detail. Although written in 1904-1905, when he returned to the United States after living abroad for more than twenty years, the essay is as pertinent today as it was 90 years ago. In this volume, the text appears as it did when originally published, and is enhanced with period illustrations and photographs and an introductory essay by Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*.

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her in order that he may survive th afternoon.

The day has been a walk throug the tony shopping district in An napolis where he has bought her a re cotton sweater with tortoiseshell bu tons. (It is a perfect sweater for Ma and it looks wonderful as she holds before her; she has short brunette ha shiny as a schoolgirl's, which he rea izes she may be.) Then a walk alon the pier, just a walk, no talking. Sh doesn't because he doesn't, and ear on such outings she always follows th man's lead. Later, after the fresh sala lunch from room service and the te she explores the suite, poking her hea into the bright bathroom, the nicest bathroom in any hotel she's been during her brief career. There's a ha dryer, a robe, a fridge, and a phon The shower is also a steam room, an the tub is a vast marble dish. There a little city of lotions and shampoo She smiles and he says, Please, fe free. Then he lies on the bed while s showers and dresses; he likes to wat her dress, but that, too, is differe because he lies there imagining a fa ily scene, the young wife busy wi her grooming, not immodest in h nakedness, her undergarments on t bed like something sweet and famili The tea was her idea when he to her she could have anything at a and she saw he was one of the o ones, there were so many odd or willing to pay for something she's ne er fully understood, and she's tak the not understanding as just bei part of it, her job, men and wome life. She's known lots of people w didn't understand what they were d ing—her parents, for example. H decision to go to work this way w based on her vision of simply fucki men for money, but the months ha been more wearing than she cou have foreseen, with all the chat and the posturing, some men who d ly want to mope or weep all throu their massage, others who want walk ahead of her into two or th nightspots and then yell at her later some bedroom at the Embassy Suit too many who want her to tell th about some other bastard who h abused her or broken her heart. I here this Eddie Zanduce just drin his tea with his old man's smile as

atches the stormy summer weather
s it it were a home movie. They've
een through it all already and he had
nd simply, without pretension, No,
nat's all right. We won't be doing
nat, but you can shower later. I'll
have you in town by five-
thirty.

The eleven people Eddie Zanduce
as killed have been properly eulo-
ized, the irony in the demise of each
elebrated in the tabloid press, the po-
ential of their lives properly inflated,
nd their fame—brief though it may
ave been—certainly gone far beyond
ny that might have accompanied
heir natural passing, and so they
eedn't be listed here and made flesh
gain. They each float in the head of
ddie Zanduce in his every movement,
hough he has never said so, or ac-
nowledged his burden in any public
ay, and it has become poor form now
o bring it up—even among the sports
eporters, a group not known for any
orn : good or bad. After the seventh
erson, about a year ago, a girl of nine
ho had gone with her cousins to see
he Orioles play New York and was
emoved from all earthly joy and wor-
; by Eddie Zanduce's powerhouse line
rive pulled foul into the seats behind
hird, the newspapers dropped the
hole story, letting it slip from the
ont page to the first page of the metro
ection. And even now after games,
he five or six reporters who bother to
ome into the clubhouse—the Ori-
les are having a lackluster start and
ave all but relinquished even a shot
t the pennant—give Eddie Zanduce's
ocker a wide berth. Through it all, he
as said one thing only, and that
even times: "I'm sorry. This is terri-
e." When asked after the third ta-
lity, a retired school principal who
as unable to avoid the sharp shot of
ne of Eddie Zanduce's foul balls, it
he unfortunate accidents might make
im consider leaving the game, he had
nd, "No."

And he became so stoic in the eyes
f the press that they painted him that
ay, and there was a general wonder
how he could stand having the
even innocent people dead by his
nd, and they said things like, "It
ould be hard on me," and "I couldn't
ke it." And so they marveled dark-

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The Arab Boycott of Israel

Does it give any clues to Arab intentions?

In the current peace negotiations between the Arab states and Israel there is much pressure on Israel to make "accommodations for peace." No such gestures are ever being requested from the Arabs. One very important matter, the Arab boycott of Israel, is never even being discussed.

What are the facts?

The Background of the Boycott. The Arab states try to make the world believe that their hostility toward Israel is based on Israel's "occupation" of Arab lands", which came under Israeli administration as a result of the 1967 Six-Day War. But the Arab boycott of Israel goes back even farther—to 1946, two years before the state of Israel even existed.

How the Boycott works. The boycott works on several levels. The *primary boycott* prohibits Arab people and Arab states to do any business—with and in Israel. The *secondary boycott* attempts to prevent businesses anywhere in the world from any economic activity with Israel and threatening them with economic retaliation if they do not conform. It is a very potent weapon since most countries and most businesses are well aware that the large Arab market and its enormous oil wealth make it most unattractive to get into the bad graces of the Arabs. Little consideration is given to the fact that the boycott is a gross violation of international law. The U.S. is the one shining exception to the almost universal acceptance of this economic blackmail. There is also the *tertiary boycott* that punishes firms that deal with blacklisted businesses. And perhaps the most damaging aspect is the so-called "*voluntary boycott*", by which companies, and in some cases entire countries, refrain pre-emptively from doing business with Israel in order to avoid retaliation by the Arabs.

The boycott also applies to international shipping, aviation and tourism. Most ships and airplanes calling on Israel are barred from Arab ports. Airplanes enroute to and from Israel cannot overfly Arab countries. Israelis or any travelers with Israeli visas in their passports may not enter most Arab countries.

The Arab Boycott Office maintains a blacklist, which at last count included over 6,300 entries in 96 countries. In the United States alone, over 12,000 firms each year receive requests from Arab firms for boycott compliance. In Europe and Asia, where, in contrast to the United States, boycott compliance is usually legal, the numbers are probably much higher.

> "The Arab boycott is undisguised economic warfare against the state of Israel. It is totally unrelated to any territorial dispute the Arabs may have with Israel."

The Cost of the Boycott to Israel. The primary damage of the boycott to the Israeli economy is that it prevents or considerably hampers investments in the country. That loss is estimated to be on the order of $500 to $600 million per year. The loss of potential trade with the Arab countries alone is on the order of over $500 million per year. Because of the boycott, Israel's commercial exports are at least 10% less than they would otherwise be—a loss of about $1.2 billion per year!

The Arab boycott is undisguised economic warfare against Israel. The boycott is totally unrelated to any territorial dispute the Arabs may have with Israel, since the boycott started over twenty years before any such territories came under Israeli administration. Its purpose is the strangulation of Israel—to achieve by economic means what the Arabs, despite many tries, have been unable to achieve by military means. But the greatest losers of the boycott may well be the Arabs themselves. Blinded by their hatred of Israel they have prevented the Middle East from becoming an area of growth and prosperity exceeding even the Asian Pacific Rim countries. Rescinding the almost 50-year old boycott would be an encouraging signal to the world and to the Israeli public. Their not bringing even such a gesture does give a clue that the intentions of the Arabs are not peaceful and that Israel is justified in proceeding with greatest caution in any peace negotiations.

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Yes, [illegible]

$ [illegible]

[illegible]



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in the field and he can fill the stands. my fat expression, a scowl or a grin, be- such a look. And when he was at the the pitch, his bat held rigid and ready this business and nothing else, the cameras went in on his face, his eyes, which were simply inscrutable to the

And now, at thirty-three, he lies on the queen-size bed of the Bayside Inn, his fingers twined behind his head, as he watches Carol Ann Menager come dripping into the room, her hair partially in a towel, her nineteen-year-old body a pale rose of the female form, five years away from any visible wear and tear from the vocation she has chosen. She warms him, appearing this way, naked and ready to chat as she reaches for her lavender bra and puts it on first, simply as convenience, and the sight of her there, bare and comfortable, makes him feel the thing he has been missing: befriended.

"But you feel bad about it, right?" Carol Ann says, her voice a husky tenor that he is even now taking to memory. "It must hurt you to know what has happened."

"I do," he says. "I do. I feel as bad

And now Carol Ann stops briefly, one leg in her lavender panties, and now she quickly pulls them up and says, "I don't know what you mean."

"I only mean what I said and nothing more," Eddie Zanduce says.

He still reclines and answers: "They

Eddie Zanduce draws a deep breath

tria, whose name was Henrich Vence and the Toronto Blue Jay, a man in costume named William Dirsk, wh was standing in the home dugou when my line drive broke his ster num. And the eight others, all equal ly unlikely and horrible, all equall bad. In fact, eleven isn't really wors than one for me, because one wa enough by itself. It doesn't doubl with two. My capacity for such feel ings, I found out, is limited. And am full."

Carol Ann Menager sits on the be and buttons her new sweater. There no hurry in her actions. She is think ing. "And if you killed someon tonight."

Here Eddie Zanduce turns to he his head rolling in the cradle of h hands, and smiles the smile he's bee using all day though it hasn't wor thin. "I wouldn't like that," he say "Although it has been shown to m that I am fully capable of such thing."

"Is it bad luck to talk about."

"I don't believe in luck, bad good." He warms his smile one mo time for her and says, "I'm glad yo came today. I wouldn't have ordere the tea." He swings his legs to sit u "And the sweater, well, it looks ver nice. We'll drive back whe you're ready."

On the drive north Carol An Menager says one thing that stays wit Eddie Zanduce after he drops her her little blue Geo in the Hilton parl ing lot and after he has put on his un form and cleats and played thro innings of baseball before a crowd twenty-four thousand, the stadium third full under low clouds this ear in the season with the Orioles goi ho-hum and school not out yet, ar she says it like so much she has said the six hours he has known her—rig out of the blue as they cruise nor from Annapolis on Route 2 in h thick silver Mercedes, a car he thin nothing of and can afford not to thin of, under the low sullen skies that blo and begrudge the very springtur hedgerows the car speeds past. It h all come to her as she'd assembl herself an hour before; and it is so di ferent than she'd imagined; in fa she'd paused while drying herself wi

e lush towel in the Bayside Inn, her
ot on the edge of the tub, and she'd
ked it like color. After three days
t of clouds crossed the Lund sky
hr. and she had to notice how
inst herself, she'd seen Eddie Zan-
ce so differently than she had
ught for nothing he was [illegible]
d and playing the dark game that
me men did, putting themselves
oser and closer to the edge of their
es until something went over, and
wasn't simply weird, like the men
10 tried to own her for the three
ndred dollars and then not touch
r, and he wasn't cruel in the other
ore overt ways, nor was he turned so
ht that to enjoy a cup of tea over the
rnin with a hooker was anything
cual, nor was she young enough to
his daughter, but she could see that
had made his pact with the random
lings he initiated at the plate in
seball parks and that the agreement
t him nothing but the long series of
npty afternoons.

"You want to know why I became a
oke?" she asks.

"Not really," he says. He drives the
ly other men drive when there are
ngs on their mind, but his mind, she
ows, has but one thing in it, it seems
nes. "You have your reasons. I re-
ect them. I think you should be care-
and do what you choose."

"You didn't even see me," she says.
ou don't even know who's in the
r with you."

He doesn't answer. He says, "I'll
ve you back by five-thirty."

"A lot of men want to know why I
ould do such a thing. They call me
ung and beautiful and talented and
ady for the world and many other
ngs that any person in any walk of
e would take as a compliment. And
nake it my challenge to answer them
differently. Are you listening?"

Eddie Zanduce drives.

"Some of them I tell that I hate the
rk but enjoy the money. They like
at because—to a man—it's true of
em. Some I tell I love the work and
ould do it for free. And they like
it because they're all boys. Every-
dy else gets a complicated story with
nother and a father and a boyfriend
two, sometimes an ex-husband,
metimes a child who is sometimes a
l and sometimes a boy, and we end
up nodding over our coffees or our brandies or whatever we're talking over, and we smile at the wisdom of [illegible] do but for them to agree with me or simply [illegible] I do tell good stories, you know, and [illegible] been giving yourself all day. If you had your life figured out any better than I do, it would have been a different day back at your sailboat motel. Sorry to [illegible] but I'll tell you the truth: what can it hurt, right? You're a killer. I'm just a whore. I'm a whore because I don't care, and because I don't care, it's a perfect job. I don't see anybody else doing any better. Show me somebody who's got a grip, just one person. Survive. That's my motto. And then tell stories. What should I do, trot out to the community college and prepare for my future as a medical doctor? I don't think so."

Eddie Zanduce looks at the young woman. Her eyes are deep, dark, near tears. "You are beautiful," he says. "I'm sorry I [illegible]"

She has been treated one hundred ways, but not this way, not with this delicate diffidence, and she is surprised that it stings. She's been hurt and neglected and ignored and made to feel [illegible] this is personal." The [illegible] "I just wish you'd see me."

For some reason, Eddie Zanduce responds to this: "I don't see people. It's not what I do. I can't afford it." Having said it, he immediately regrets how [illegible] Why is he talking to her? "I'm tired," he adds, and he is tired—of it all. He regrets his decision to have company, purchase it, because it has turned out to be what he wanted so long, and something [illegible] girl has crossed [illegible] view. She is very smart and pretty and—he hates this—he does feel bad she's a hooker.

And then she says the haunting thing, the advice that [illegible] into the game later that night. "Why don't you try to do it?" He looks at her as she finishes. "You [illegible] people by accident. What if you tried? Could you kill somebody on purpose?"

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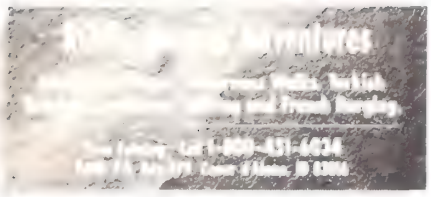
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Continued from page 75

forty minutes in silence, Eddie Zanduce pulls into the Hilton parking lot and Carol Ann Menager says, "Right up there." When he stops the car, she steps out and says to him, "I'll be at the game. Thanks for the tea."

And now at two and one, a count he loves, Eddie Zanduce steps out of the batter's box, self-conscious in a way he hasn't been for years and years and can't figure out until he ticks upon it: she's here somewhere, taking the night off to catch a baseball game or else with a trick who even now would be charmed by her unaffected love for a night at the park, the two of them laughing like teenagers over popcorn, and now she'd be pointing down at Eddie, saying, "There, that's the guy." Eddie Zanduce listens to the low murmur of twenty-four thousand people who have chosen to attend tonight's game knowing he would be here, here at bat, a place from which he could harm them irreparably, for he has done it eleven times before. The announcers have handled it the same since the fourth death—a young lawyer taken by a hooked line shot, the ball shattering the frontal bone of his skull (the lawyer had watched every second from the tock! of the bat, when the ball was a small dot that grew through its unreliable one-second arc into a huge white spheroid of five ounces entering his face)—and what the announcers began to say then was some version of "Please be alert, ladies and gentlemen. Coming to the ballpark implies responsibility. That ball is likely to go absolutely anywhere." But everybody knows this. Every single soul, even the twenty Japanese businessmen not five days out of Osaka know about Eddie Zanduce, and behind first base they titter and moan, even the four babies in arms, not one of them five months old, spread throughout the house know about the killer at the plate, as do the people sitting behind the babies disgusted at the parents for risking such a thing, and the drunks, a dozen people swimming that abyss, as Eddie taps his cleats, they know, even one in his stuporous sleep, his head collapsed on his chest, knows that Eddie could kill any one of them tonight. The number eleven hovers everywhere, as does the number twelve waiting to be written. It's already printed on a best-selling T-shirt, and there are others, "I'll be 12th" and "Take Me 12th!" and "NEXT" and many others all on T-shirts, that Eddie Zanduce can read in any crowd in any city in which the Orioles take the field. When he was listed on the starting roster—where he'd been for seven years—the crowd had doubled. People came as they'd come out tonight, on a chilly cloudy night in Baltimore, a night that should have seen ten thousand maybe, more likely eight, they flocked to the ballpark, crammed themselves into sold-out games or sat out—as tonight—in questionable weather as if they were asking to be twelfth, as if their lives were fully worthy of being interrupted, as if—like right now with Eddie stepping back into the batter's box—they were asking, Take me next, hit me, I have come here to be killed.

Eddie Zanduce remembers Carol Ann Menager in the car. He hoists his bat and says, "I'm going to kill one of you now."

"What's that, Eddie?"

Caulkins, the Minnesota catcher, has heard his threat, but it means nothing to Eddie, and he says, "Nothing. Just something I'm going to do." He says this stepping back into the batter's box and lifts his bat up to the ready. Things are in place. And as if enacting the foretold, he slices the first pitch savagely, shaving it short into the first-base seats, the kind of ugly, truncated liner that has only damage as its intent, and adrenaline pricks the twenty-four thousand hearts sitting in that dangerous circle, but—after a beat that allows the gasp to subside, a catchbreath that is merely overture for a scream—two young men in blue Maryland sweatshirts leap up from the crowd above first base and one waves his old brown mitt, in which it is clear there is a baseball. They hug and hop up and down for a moment as the crowd witnesses it all, sitting as silent members of a scared congregation, and then a roar begins that rides on the night air, filling the stadium.

"I'll be damned," Caulkins declares,

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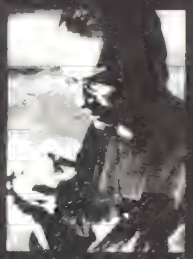
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standing behind Eddie Zanduce with his mask off. "He caught that ball, Ed die."

Those words are etched in Eddi Zanduce's mind as he steps again up t the plate. *He caught that ball.* He look across at the young men, but they hav sat down, dissolved, leaving a girl with short dark hair and a red sweate standing behind them who smiles a him widely and rises once on her toe and waves a little wave that says, " knew it. I just knew it." She is alon standing there waving, and Eddi thinks that: she's come alone.

The next pitch comes in fat an high, and as Eddie Zanduce swing and connects he pictures this ba streaming down the line uninterrupt ed, too fast to be caught, a flash off th cranium of a man draining his beer the very second a plate of bone carve into his brain and the lights go ou The real ball, though, snaps on a shar hop over the third baseman, staying fair territory for a double. Eddie Zar duce runs, runs hard, past first to se ond. There he stands. There is a gre cheering; he may be a killer, but he on the home team and he's driven the first run of the ball game. His fir hit in this month of May. And Edd Zanduce has a feeling he hasn't had f four years, since it all began, since th weather in his life changed for goo and what he feels is anger. He ca taste the dry anger in his mouth an it tastes good. He smiles and he know the cameras are on him, but he can help himself, he is so pleased to b angry, and the view he has now of th crowd behind the plate, three tiers them, lifts him to a new feeling: h hates them. He hates them all so muc that the rich feeling floods throug his brain like nectar. He is transpor ed by hatred, exulted, drenched. H leads off second, so on edge and piss off he feels he's going to fly with th intoxicating hatred, and he smiles th different smile, the challenge and th glee, and he feels his heart beating his neck and arms, hot here in th center of the world. It's a feeling you like to explain to someone after th game. He plans to. He's got two mo at bats tonight, the gall rises in h throat like life itself, and he is goi to kill somebody—or let them kn he was trying.

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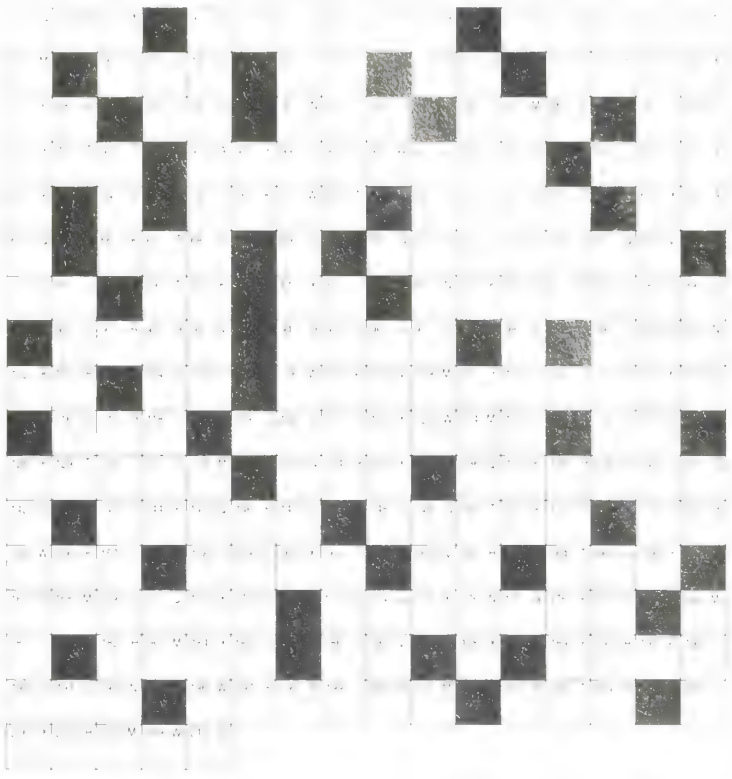
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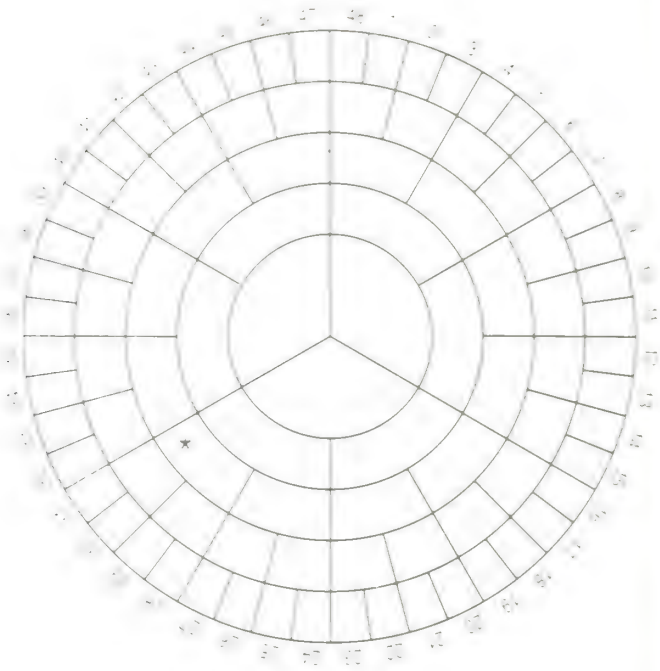
The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The letters form an acrostic, the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 72.



WORDS

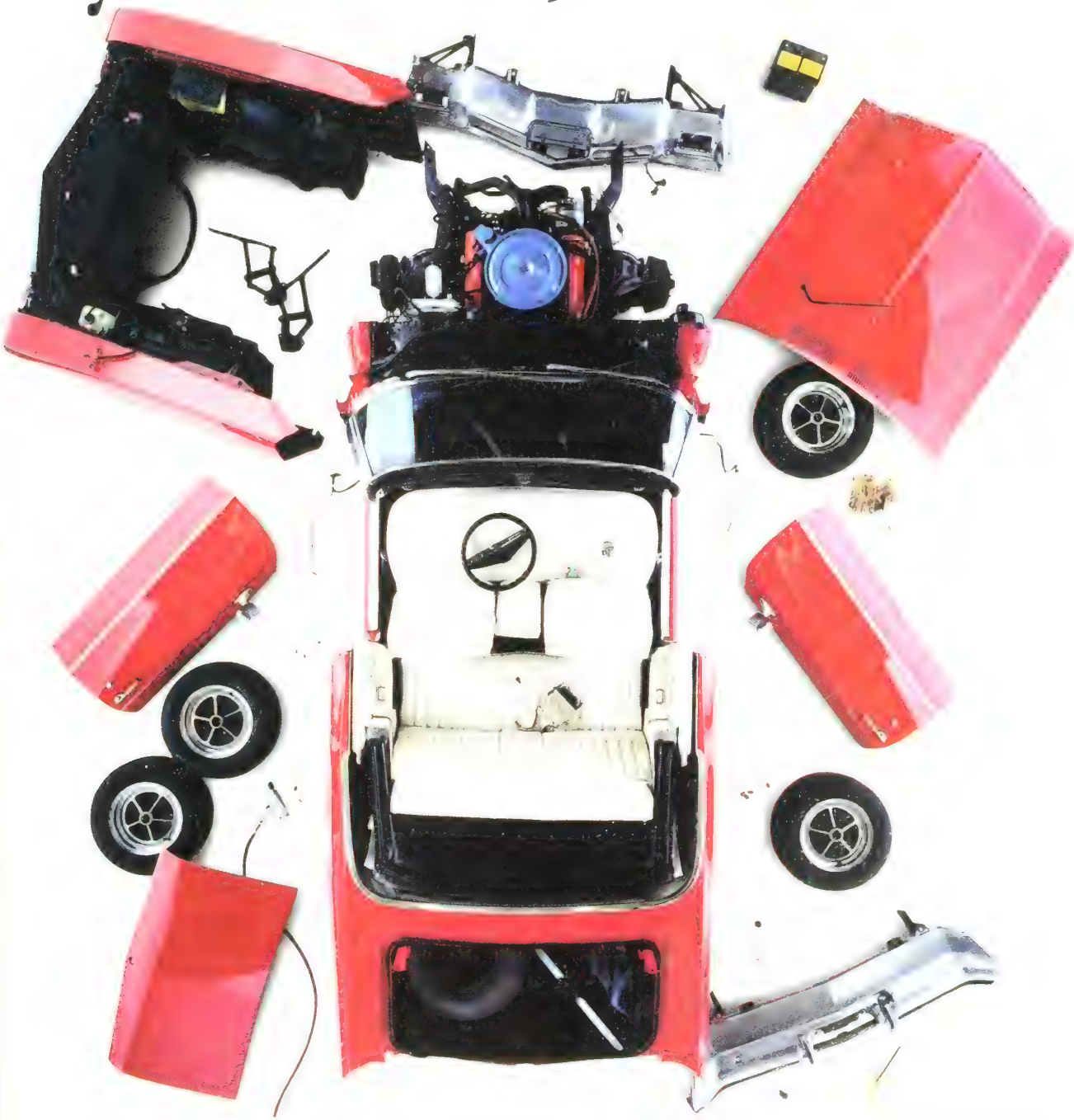
A. Perks	2	22	107	9	64	58		
B. Guaranteed	12	117	45	204	25	94		
C. "There now is your insular city of the ___" (Melville, *Moby Dick*)	169	16	43	141	186	96	87	10
D. Courtroom social banter	73	179	142	153	89	202	54	167
E. Village on the Welsh coast, 5 mi. N of Barmouth	151	178	86	52	115	146	200	95
F. Extravagantly enthusiastic	176	67	3	7	41	45	100	189
G. . . . , for instance	185	38	141	113	85	177	149	70
H. Tuna of warm ocean waters	53	92	112	44	138	62	182	165
I. Site of the National Baseball Hall of Fame	37	130	82	111	199	192	125	19
J. Important (2 wds.)	181	23	148	104	161	47	29	143
K. Affections, breasts, conceived as centers of emotions	66	24	102	56	84	80	8	51
L. Scores a strike under par	140	69	6	118	54	157	77	18
M. Chemical used to kill pinkweeds, etc.	124	35	15	180	168	109	183	132
N. Dating from a time specified	133	101	31	83	11	176	208	201
O. In the direction of	1	61	36	193	121	28	172	
P. 1854 Dickens novel (2 wds.)	144	128	137	55	152	77	191	4
Q. Sets at ease, gravity	75	127	21	48	145	170	136	65
R. Informal, casual, extempore	190	105	30	91	98	134	207	103
S. Hearth, home	158	5	17	174	88	131	194	198
T. Distressing, sorrowful	150	203	79	33	129	164	67	4
U. Type of Delphinium of the buttercup family	165	116	173	59	49	119	71	153
V. Bushed, winded (3 wds.)	193	199	135	20	4	13	126	76
W. Call the home [illegible] (2 wds.)	209	123	106	46	196	155	10	44
X. "I ___ and colour which I [illegible] (2 wds., Tennyson, [illegible])	135	3	39	171	114	14	175	1
		206	63	188	184	26	7	122

Jiminy Cricket!



24 Tricky sumo adversary finally is retiring
25 Out-of-fashion, buys some stocks the wrong way
Clobbered Bates Motel resident
Heroin hit some where we live
Brief appearance amounted to nothing
29 Space traveler takes care of minute alien
30 Indeed, assuming chairman is a jerk
31 Cadge from Low Church
32 Sporty kind of bike was blue
Nitwit flipped over last character of the long poem
34 Moved very slowly, having drunk all but a bit of brandy
"Dirty Dozen" broken up into groups
36 Having a high Mass, needs to be converted
37 Reforms, showing results after getting married
Engineer done with front of airline terminal
"Matioso" covers the old man with a lot of experience
40 Bible story includes holy part
41 Full of energy exercising, let's firm up
42 Mean stretch of weather
43
44 In the Middle Ages, he was free to go in palace or
45 Work in a store upset relative in Kansas City
46 Mrs. Kramden develops spite after getting married
Trap in grove traps activity of parrot

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Most engineers get paid for putting cars together. John and his team at Saturn get paid for tearing them apart.

You see, John is what some folks might call a champion of the environment. Having grown up on a farm in the hills of western Pennsylvania, he has this firm belief that you shouldn't take from the earth what you can't give back. So now he and his colleagues spend the better part of their waking hours dreaming up ways to avoid messing up the planet. Reducing paint spray emissions into the atmosphere. Turning unusable fenders into new wheel covers. Reprocessing parts that might otherwise end up in some landfill. (Like that stuff our immobilized friend is buried in over there.)



At Saturn, we like to think that "green" is more than just another color of our cars.

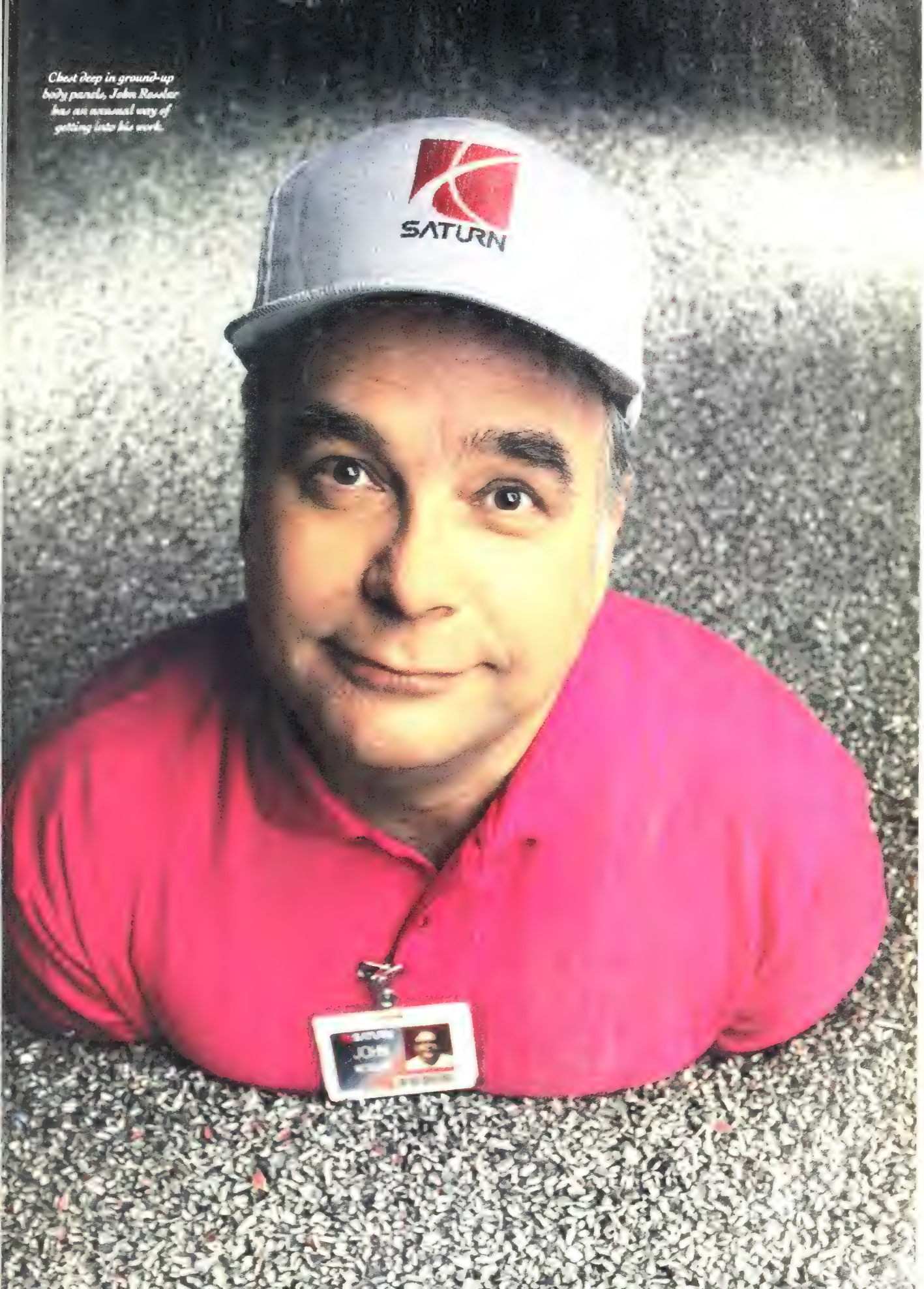
Of course, these days, it seems like everybody's hopping on the environmental bandwagon. And as far as John's concerned, "so much the better." Just as long as the deeds follow the words.

"What we're doing isn't just about being good corporate citizens. It's about trying to be respectful to a world which we're only visiting."



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you can still be there even if you can't go there. It's amazing what we can do together.

GTE

HARPER'S

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What's on your PowerBook?

Father Don Doil
Priest

Wedding homilies
Student addresses
Fax/modem
Faxes to Jesuit missionaries in [illegible]
Entire photo layout of book I'm writing on the Sioux Indians
Grant proposal for my book
Reflections on scripture
Letter template, with my letterhead and signature
Envelope template
QuarkXPress
Microsoft Word
FileMaker Pro
Scans of photos I took in Ireland
[illegible] Planning memo
A calculator
A spellchecker
A calendar
Design for wedding programs
Design for my Christmas card
Syllabi and assignments for my classes
My mechanic's phone number





Todd Rundgren
Interactive artist

The dates of my concert tour

Songs I've written

Computer programs I've written

Scanned photos I retouched for my new album cover

Fax/modem

Sequencer that lets the PowerBook control my synthesizers onstage

A letter to the editor

A bunch of typefonts

Flowfazer, the screensaver I codeveloped

CompuServe

Microsoft Word

Adobe Photoshop

Think C, Code

ToasterLink

A lecture I delivered on interactive music

A lecture I delivered to the New York State Bar

Animation clips

An alarm clock

My last video

Storyboards and graphics for my next video

LETTERS

On Being, and Not Being, a Victim

[In "Victory Lessons: On Not Being a Victim," March], I was brought up [illegible] that allowed me little chance to make my own way in the world with any clarity—and certainly never allowed me to protect myself or the men I was with. I, too, slept with men with whom I had nothing in common, not even the lust that might have drawn us together for a moment. Like the author, I was "unable to stand up for myself because I had never been taught how." I can distinctly remember several occasions when I went to bed with a man because I could not figure out how to get him out of the [illegible] That was then. This is now, and, like Gaitskill, I can defuse almost any situation. Like her, I've come to realize that [illegible] different speeds, and don't react to the [illegible] this I finally learned, but not without the help of psychotherapy, a good marriage, motherhood, and endless years of growing up.

[illegible] feminist critics like Katie Roiphe and Camille Paglia do so much disservice. Women who get to the top by riding on the backs of women who can't fight as well or as confidently don't deserve our lionization, do they? Isn't it better to reserve for such unaggressive women, as well as for all the men we women are involved with, a small measure of kindness and humanity? To take a man's hand in ours rather [illegible] As a feminist of long standing, one whom many might call radical, I had a *frisson* of excitement when Lorena Bobbitt cut off her husband's penis; there have been moments, one in particular, when, if I had had a knife within easy reach, I like to think I would have done the same. But the truth is that we accomplish a lot more if we get strength by ourselves and *for* ourselves, instead of taking men's strength from them. Delilah took Samson's hair; Lorena John Wayne's penis. But none of that does any good for those of us who actually have to or want to live with men, or have sons to raise in someone's likeness.

Gaitskill is absolutely right: violence against women is a violation of the dignity of everyone involved. But until people understand this simple yet profound notion, there will be crimes and victims aplenty.

Lisa Solod
Oxford, England

As a young woman who reports on national acquaintance-rape prevention efforts, I welcomed Mary Gaitskill's observations. The only problem is that she doesn't offer anything new to the debate. Gaitskill's perceptions seem refreshing and striking only because of the narrowness of the past few years of "intellectual debate" over "date rape hysteria." Few critics have bothered to report on the wide range of campus feminists fighting rape, much less to analyze sexism. Although offering

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riences and evolving rights and responsibilities. Commentators also

tions about how young people are trying to redefine sex. Only then will we

a true sexual revolution.

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"DART TO THE HEART"

BRUCE COCKBURN



Although I applaud Mary Gaitski realization of self-esteem and perso responsibility, it is unfortunate th she uses as a foundation for h thoughtful essay a so-called date ra she experienced while under the i fluence of LSD. I do not think her t is a fantasy brought to light for t purpose of illuminating the "metaph ical truth." The date rape probably happen. The question is whether not it took place in her head.

As a teenager I, too, was occasio ally whacked-out on acid. I recall o er, trip to a farm where—with an traordinary expansion of my senses p vided by either a hit of purple micro or windowpane, I can't recall which I had lengthy, intricate conversati with a cow and several pigs. Dust mo in the barn turned out to be tiny spa ships piloted by cans of Hamm's be (The invaders later gave me a 12-p of Hamm's Draft, and I chugged it help bring myself down.) Bales of h were writhing bundles of worms; chi ens were scolding, ebony-eyed sch teachers; and the leaves of the tree the yard hummed with loud, meta music. I did meet and talk to pe that day, but I can't remember w they or I said, or whether I perform any uncivilized acts or gestures.

Steve Wilent
Rhododendron, Oreg.

Mary Gaitskill's essay was, witho doubt, the most sensitive and inte gent treatment of date rape I have s in a national magazine. I especially preciated the fact that Gaitskill t time to analyze why date rape happ Like Gaitskill, I've been raped, and reasons she posits as to why the i dent happened to her also apply to

Although I am responsible for p ting myself in a situation where I vulnerable to being raped, there someone else involved who, not i dentally, broke the law. Because of confusion as to whether date rap really a crime, there has been very tle examination of men who com date rape as opposed to those wh olently rape strangers. As critic "rape crisis" feminism endlessly p out, men are not animals, incapabl responsibility and rational though

NOTEBOOK

Trial by klieg light

By Lewis H. Lapham

f hypocrisy were gold, the Capitol would e Fort Knox.

—Senator John McCain,
March 11, 1994

Throughout most of the winter nd much of the spring, the news me- ia so diligently took up the cudgels f the Whitewater inquisition that by he second week in March I began to vonder why the Washington press orps wasn't suggesting that President Bill Clinton submit to a trial by com- at or an ordeal by fire. Nearly every dition of every newspaper leaked fresh tains on the President's name and rep- tation, but the narrative made sense nly if it was meant to be understood s a test of faith, as if the President vere being asked to hold white-hot iron n his hands or walk on burning coals. Mostly the news was made of rumors— bout the slovenliness of the Presi- ent's ethics and the seediness of the 'resident's friends—and after five nonths of headlines, the burden of he complaint amounted to little more han a set of variations on a theme by Rush Limbaugh. As follows:

1.) While serving as governor of Arkansas in the late 1970s, Mr. Clin- on and his wife lost money in a real- state speculation on the Whitewater River. Variously posted at $68,000, 46,000, $13,000, and $500, the loss as variously interpreted as a sign of nancial negligence or political graft.

2.) The Clintons formed a business artnership with James and Susan Mc- Dougal, neither of them the sort of erson likely to be invited to dinner by Pamela Harriman.

3.) Trading in several commodity narkets, on an investment of $1,000, Mrs. Clinton realized a profit of near- y $100,000. The trades were arranged y Robert ("Red") Bone, a professional ardsharp.

4.) Vincent Foster, a White House lawyer who apparently had been managing Mr. and Mrs. Clinton's personal investments, committed suicide in July of 1993. Not even the oldest and wisest political columnist in Washington knew why he had done so, but it was assumed that because Mr. Foster had been a friend and law partner of Mrs. Clinton's in Arkansas, he had died under circumstances other than those described to the police. *The Wall Street Journal* suspected foul play.

5.) Ten government functionaries, among them George Stephanopoulos, the President's aide-de-camp, received subpoenas from a Washington grand jury taking testimony about the failure of the Arkansas savings and loan once owned by Mr. McDougal. Avoiding photographers as they passed in and out of the courthouse, the witnesses presented the pleasing appearance of criminal suspects.

6.) During the ten years that Mr. Clinton served as governor of Arkansas, a quorum of well-placed people in Little Rock made a lot of money, not always in ways that could be safely explained to the IRS.

Although I don't doubt that three or four of the points in question might be made into a losing election or a television miniseries, they don't add to a sum of high crimes and misdemeanors likely to impeach a president, and they reveal nothing of the President's character that wasn't obvious two years ago during his election campaign. Surely it has been clear from the outset that Mr. Clinton is not Thomas Jefferson. As a presidential candidate he was known to have evaded the military draft during the Vietnam War and to have enjoyed the company of women to whom he wasn't married; the Arkansas newspapers knew him as "Slick Willie," and in the November election he received 40 percent of his votes from people who believed him to be an inveterate liar. Within six months of his triumphant arrival in Washington, the President showed himself abjectly beholden to the monied interests (in New York and Los Angeles as well as in Flippin, Arkansas), as a man who doesn't make good on most of his promises and drifts on the tide of the opinion polls—in brief and in sum, an ambitious American politician, circa 1994, loyal to the cause of expedience and intent upon seizing the bauble of fame. But why should the discovery come as a surprise, or provoke the news media to a furious casting of stones and a frantic turning over of rocks?

The answers speak to the cynicism of the permanent government in Washington (i.e., the Congress, the entrenched bureaucracies, the news media), which regards even the faintest prospect of genuine political reform as both an affront to its dignity and a calamity of nature. By extinguishing the little light of idealism that remained to the Clinton presidency as recently as last Christmas, the permanent government protects its own agenda, its own prerogatives, its own definition of politics as a synonym for the market in fear and greed. Let Mr. and Mrs. Clinton be seen as hypocrites, as venal as junk-bond merchants, and as duplicitous as Michael Deaver or Ed Meese, and then maybe the American public could put aside [illegible] and for all—the childish notion of a government animated by moral principle.

Acting their parts as the servants of the status quo and accepting hints and documents from both Republican and Democratic informants, the various divisions of the news media presented different stagings of the Whitewater morality play. On the nominally liberal left, the voices of aroused conscience in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* approached the topic of Mr. Clinton's character behind the masks

paroxysms of hysterical glee. Once again, the contradictions were grotesque—

ly supported the Iran-Contra arms

swindles as the patriotic labor of cap-

[illegible] the [illegible] of the *Journal*'s editorial page in late January, I made the mistake of attributing the tone of near hysteria to the paranoid [illegible] Bartley, its editor. An ardent believer in the mystical properties of "Star Wars," Bartley deeply reveres Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, [illegible] he sometimes confuses with Napoleon or Alexander the Great, and thinks that the entire history of capitalism is explained by the Laffer curve. Anybody who fails to acknowledge the intellectual and moral purity of the 1980's, Bartley associates with the Antichrist. At a dinner party some years ago in New York, I remember him mistaking me for Teddy Kennedy and, seizing me by the tie, attempting to choke me to death. His editorials often fall into similarly violent passions, and the discovery of lacunae in President Clinton's tax records moved him to righteous scorn:

> To recommend that Bill and Hillary Clinton should now like the authors of a David Mamet play, in which glib five-and-dimers [illegible] the cheeks of the [illegible] and hope that one of the big boys will offer them a piece of the [illegible]

At first I thought the thundering on the right merely foolish. For all intents and purposes President Clinton is a Republican, friendly to a corporate view of the world, an advocate of the North American Free Trade Agreement, unlikely to question the wisdom of Merrill Lynch. As his chief financial advisers he had appointed Robert Rubin and Roger Altman, both of whom [illegible] to their success on Wall Street, and as secretary of the [illegible] he had appointed Lloyd Bentsen, formerly the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and [illegible] companies and the banks. Maybe Mr. Clinton [illegible] New York, and possibly he had spent [illegible] much time with the "five-and-dimers" in Arkansas, but quite clearly he didn't intend to threaten the established order. Why then Mr. Bartley's feverish crying out against "fanatic propagandists" and "left wing lobbyists"?

Because in the public mind, if not in Mr. Bartley's, President Clinton, no matter how flawed his character or how weak his efforts to shift the balance of political power in Washington, still embodies and represents the hope that the government might be used to improve the lot of ordinary citizens, that in at least some of its functions it might do something for people who can't afford to hire a lobbyist at the going rate of $400 an hour. Despite the embarrassments of his first eighteen months in office, President Clinton had been incautious enough to actually send a few bills to Congress proposing reforms of the environmental and campaign-finance laws, and his wife, anathematized in a *Wall Street Journal* headline as "Hillary in the Pits," was attempting to rearrange the national health-care system, which, as Mr. Bartley's readers well know, is tantamount to messing around with 14 percent of the gross domestic product. Arguing that the Whitewater news proved the Clinton Administration's false claim to the throne of virtue, the *Journal* recommended a prompt and happy return to the glorious year of 1985, back to the Cold War and supply-side economics and Nancy Reagan dancing with Alfred Bloomingdale under the stars in the Hollywood Bowl.

Like the *Journal*'s editorial page, the permanent government in Washington welcomed the Whitewater investigations as a means of making time stand still. A procession of Democratic politicians (very earnest, very high-minded) appeared on the Sunday morning talk shows to say that the foul breath of scandal had paralyzed the friends of good government. They blamed the Republicans for the "crippling effect" that had postponed or delayed the passage of new and noble laws. Were it not for the din of rumor and the obstacles placed in the path of progress by a sensation-mongering news media, they would move at once to get on with the business of "solving" the real problems facing this coun-

y." The pose was disingenuous, but obody bothered to explain the joke. xtending to their Democratic guests ne same courtesies offered to Senator D'Amato, the television anchorpeople efrained from pointing out that the Democratic Party holds a majority in oth the Senate and the House of epresentatives, that if it wished to adress "the real problems facing this ountry," it didn't lack the means with hich to do so.

But in Washington the trick is to ustain the illusion of social change hile preserving the freeze frame of the atus quo, and "the true business of overnment," notwithstanding the arnest rhetoric that decorates the naon's op-ed pages, is the achieving of a erfect state of inaction. Congress warly avoids solutions to "real problems" ecause solutions invariably mean that omebody has to lose something or give omething up; solutions imply change, nd change is unacceptable because hange translates into resentment, and esentment loses votes.

In place of energetic politics, the ermanent government substitutes thetrical spectacle, and the media set ne terms of the courtship imposed upn the man who would prove himself t for the hand of the republic. Meieval chroniclers tell of princesses ho send Christian knights in search f dragons, requiring them to recover its and pieces of the true cross and to ander for many days and nights in eathen forests. Toward the end of the wentieth century, in a country that rides itself on its faith in reason, presidents come and go within the flaming rc of klieg lights, weighed in the daily balance of the public-opinion polls, heir voting records and childhood emories sifted through the labyrinths *Crossfire* or *The McLaughlin Group*, nswering, in twenty words or less, uestions that cannot be answered in thousand words.

Like President Reagan, President linton possesses an impressive talent r the part. Just as Mr. Reagan estabished the authority of his presidency by aking a joke of his gunshot wound—Honey, I forgot to duck"—so also Mr. linton earned the respect of the elecorate by making a sermon on 60 Min*tes* of his liaison with Gennifer lowers. Generally admired for his capacity to bear insult and humiliation, the President [illegible] on the evening of March 24 before a mob of reporters assembled in the Press Room of the White House. At ease in the klieg lights, preserving within the tastiness of himself the imperturbable quiet of a public statue, Mr. Clinton for thirty-eight perilous minutes answered questions about the Whitewater real estate deal, never once betraying the least sign of fear or disgust. On the strength of his performance he recovered ten ratings points in the opinion polls, and the news media the next day were unanimous in their praise—"Adroit, Adept, Ingratiating" (the *Washington Post*), "Magnificent" (ABC News); "Dramatic, high-wire clash" (the *New York Times*).

The presidency undoubtedly constitutes a fearful test of a man's capacities, but his capacities for what? Even if the electorate understood or cared about something as tedious as the mechanics of government, how does it choose between the rivals for its fealty and esteem? The one attribute that can be known and seen comes to stand for all the other attributes that remain invisible, and so the test becomes one of finding out who can survive the stupidity and pitiless indifference of the television cameras.

Why be satisfied with the play of mere words? Why not equip the President of the United States with a broadsword or an old crossbow and send him into the field against four horsemen in black armor or an infuriated bear? Assuming that the event is properly promoted and attractively staged, I don't see why it wouldn't draw a sizable audience (at least as large as the one drummed up for Nancy Kerrigan and Tonya Harding at the Olympic Games), and I expect that any number of corporate sponsors could be counted upon to supply commercial messages touting the frontier spirit that made America great. I can imagine Peter Jennings or Connie Chung providing sententious commentary about the President's prior showings against a lion, a Ninja, and a wolf, and some days later—assuming, praise Jesus, that the President survived—I can see him talking to Oprah, or Larry, or Jay about his lifelong love of manly sports. ■

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HARPER'S INDEX

Chances that an American knows the position of his or her senators on health-care reform : 1 in 5

Chances that an American can define the term "managed care" : 1 in 3

Ratio of network evening-news time devoted to health-care reform this year to the time devoted to Whitewater : 1:3

Ratio of the amount President Clinton spent on polling last year to the amount spent by George Bush in 1989 : 28:1

Percentage of Americans who would rather spend a week in jail than be president of the United States : 52

Number of dues-paying members of the Osaka, Japan, chapter of the Hillary Rodham Clinton Fan Club : 6

Number of government employees Vice President Gore invited to accompany him on his trip to Russia last December : 600

Number this was reduced to after Ambassador Thomas Pickering complained : 200

Ratio of the size of the staff at the U.S. embassy in Paris to the size of the staff at the U.S. embassy in Beijing : 3:1

Percentage of 15- to 24-year-old French workers who are unemployed : 24

Percentage of all songs played on French radio after 1995 that must be in French, according to a new law passed this year : 40

Number of American states in which a notary public is required to be literate in English : 12

Number of applicants Sears Roebuck invited to be interviewed last year for 95 executive-training positions : 4,019

Ratio of the number of job inquiries received last year by the Peace Corps to the number of positions available : 33:1

Percentage of registered Republicans who favor ending the U.S. trade embargo on Cuba : 32

Percentage change, between 1992 and 1993, in U.S. imports of Haitian goods : +45

Percentage of Americans who say they will not buy products imported from Vietnam : 60

Percentage of all natural-gas and oil fields licensed by Vietnam last year that are in waters claimed by China : 100

Portion of China's timber consumption accounted for by household cooking and heating : 1/3

Percentage change, since 1850, in the number of wooded acres in New Hampshire : +118

Price of one cubic foot of Whitewater dirt, from the Whitewater Development Company, digging not included : $19.95

Rank of Arkansas among states with the highest divorce rate in 1992 : 1

Age, in years, of a piece of wedding fruitcake on display at the Grover Cleveland Birthplace, in Caldwell, New Jersey : 106

Membership of the Arcigola Slow Food Movement, a group founded in Italy to protest the proliferation of fast food : 50,000

Estimated number of songbirds killed for food in Italy last year : 50,000,000

Amount spent by the town of Hidalgo, Texas, in 1992 to erect a 10-foot statue of a killer bee : $17,850

Number of American amateur soccer players killed by falling goalposts since 1979 : 18

Chances that a member of the U.S. men's National Soccer Team was born abroad : 1 in 3

Seating capacity of the National Bowling Stadium, scheduled to open in Reno next year : 2,000

Chances that a show opening on Broadway this season is a revival : 1 in 2

Number of times Hector Montalvo, a New York City bank teller, has seen *Cats* : 374

Amount Random House lost on the 29 of its books included on the 1993 *New York Times* Notable Books list : $698,000

Change, since 1987, in the number of pieces of business mail delivered by the U.S. Postal Service : –10,000,000

Average number of faxes transmitted in the United States each minute : 88,000

Percentage of Americans who feel they are being "left behind" by technology : 46

Percentage of these who say they don't care : 16

Chances that a gallon of milk consumed in the United States last year was delivered by a milkman : 1 in 100

Number of American states that require sperm banks to be licensed : 4

Rank of Father's Day among days on which the largest number of collect calls are made : 1

Figures cited are the latest available as of April 1994. Sources are listed on page 69.
Harper's Index is adapted for [illegible]

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READINGS

[Speech]

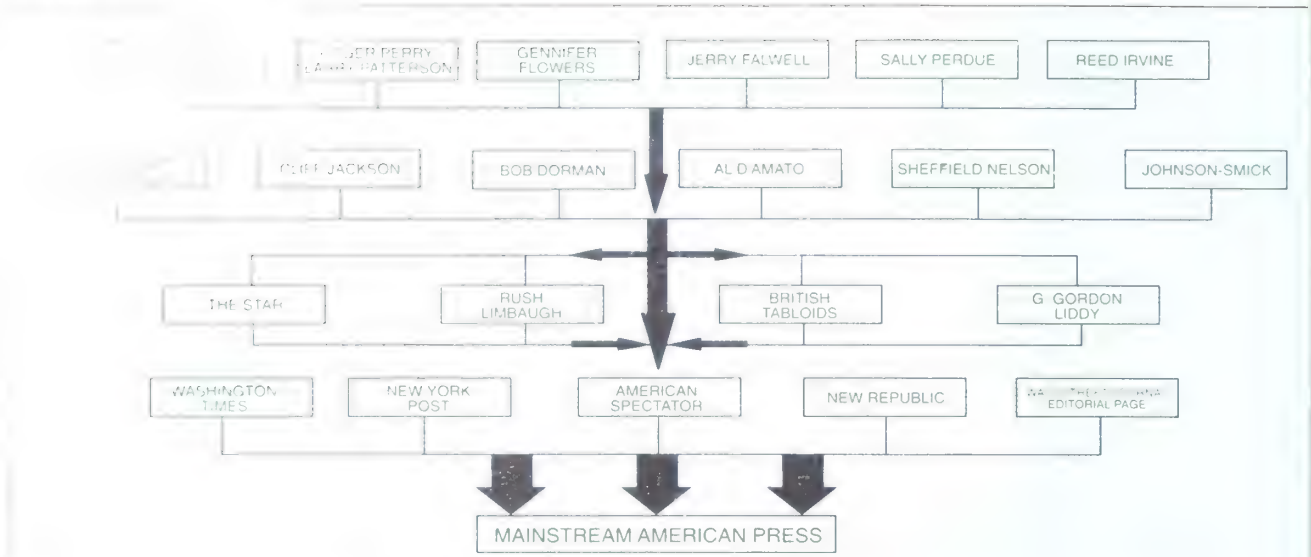
THE SCANDAL OF AMERICAN SCANDALS

From an address given in April by Garrison Keillor to an audience of journalists at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. Keillor's story "Anna Karenina: The Sequel" appeared in the July 1993 issue of Harper's Magazine.

I was not going to talk about Whitewater today, but then I thought that if I didn't you'd think I know something about it, and the only way for me to prove that I don't is to talk about it at length, so I will. The Whitewater story has run for months on the power of suggestion. With any shaggy-dog story like this one, whose point is its pointlessness, people become fascinated by the fact that they are still standing and listening to what apparently is a long, winding circumstantial joke that the teller keeps complicating by tossing in new unrelated elements—things we don't know that may be true and, if they are, then other things that may be true. Eventually, Whitewater became a story about itself—"Why Are We Journalists Devoting So Much Time to a Story That Doesn't Exist Yet?"—and Zeitgeist pieces appeared about how this story would never have gotten so big if it weren't that the people distrusted the President anyway. And now the story dwindles to a few scraps—the possibility of inconsistencies in statements about things that nobody ever suggested were wrong to begin with. The American people are sitting on the bleachers waiting for the elephant to come out and all we see are the guys selling cotton candy. That's you.

This is a lousy way to run a scandal. In England, they know how scandals should happen. When I was in London in March, there was a story about a Conservative member of Parliament found naked and dead in his kitchen, an accidental victim of a very unusual sexual act that you should never try except with adult supervision. This is a typical British political scandal: it's big, sudden, fascinating. It entertains [illegible] public expense. There were no hearings, no special prosecutor, no tapes and computer disks to be subpoenaed, no mountains of financial detail to sort through, just a politician who stood for old-fashioned conservative family values and yet had a rich fantasy life. It's all in the papers, in great detail, and then it's over.

A scandal is a revelation of the humanity of famous people. Famous and powerful people can be amazingly human. A man can be a U.S. senator and knowledgeable about foreign policy and tax law and so forth and also be capable of lunging at a woman he barely knows and kissing her on the lips against her will—a pretty dumb thing to do. And he can do this again and again, over the years, grabbing women, hugging them, saying dumb things to them—a dreadful experience for the women, and they're right to expose him and [illegible] How much time should the U.S. Senate spend on this? How much should the senator spend on legal counsel? [illegible] Must this make its way through the courts for the next four years? Wouldn't it be better to simply say, "Any U.S. senator who lunges at a woman and kisses her against her will, or grabs her, will pay that woman $50,000 per lunge," and let it go at that? Skip the hearings. Let it be in the paper for a day [illegible]



... was distributed in April by James Carville, an adviser to President Clinton, at a breakfast interview

... He is sixty and

ing, your mouth enchanting, your back elegant, your hands so graceful, your skin so very fair and satin to touch, your breasts so petite, your nipples so pink like a girl's, your legs so gazelle-like, your smell so overpoweringly intoxicating. How I long to hold you in my arms and to envelop you in

Now that's the sort of scandal a person can enjoy: a distinguished man infatuated with a younger woman who then betrays him for money and ... and who then sees, through her publicist, that she revealed the officer to the newspaper not for the quarter-million dollars but so that she could "put it behind her and get on with her life."

... Puccini could have set that to music. Getting a little help on your futures trading from a rich friend who is a lawyer representing a company ... for the state ... has ...

Whereas the British relish a scandal in which the private life of the great is suddenly revealed in a burst of light, we prefer scandals that consist of shadowy characters in cahoots who work ...

trepid reporting. The truth is, though, that ours is a pretty open and democratic society. The press was after this President for weeks to answer questions about Whitewater, and when the President stood up to answer them, he got questions like, "Who do you feel is responsible for this Whitewater story getting as big as it has?" Dumb questions.

I must say, I like this President. He enjoys his work, he is a man of good humor, and he speaks in whole sentences, sometimes gracefully. A democracy needs good humor to keep it bumping along. When scandal breaks and we see the humanity of the great revealed, naked, dumb, there is always a cry for new rules or at least a new awareness and sensitivity that will prevent this terrible thing from ever happening again. We should be careful, though, not to make the world so fine and good that you and I can't enjoy living in it. A world that is safe from any sexual harassment will be a world in which there is no flirtation. A world that is safe from thieves will have no entrepreneurs. A government that knows no friendly connections or favors between politicians and businessmen would be the first in the history of the world. And a world without fiction, my friends, would be unbearable for all of us.

[Script]

PLUTONIUM'S HAPPY FACE

From the script for "The Plutonium Story," an eleven-minute cartoon distributed earlier this year by Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation, a Japanese company, to television stations, schools, and residents in the Fukui region of Japan; the company recently opened a nuclear reactor there. The cartoon is narrated by a smiling character named Pluto Boy, who wears a space helmet bearing the chemical symbol for plutonium. Translated from the Japanese by Aileen Mioko Smith, a Japanese anti-nuclear activist.

Hello, everyone! I am Pluto Boy, made from plutonium. It's nice to meet you all. It is a real shame that I was first used in atomic bombs, because, like everyone, I really hate war. I love working for peace. And yet, there are lots of nasty rumors about me. There are many people out there who think of plutonium as a big, bad monster. Let me ask you: Do you have an image of me as something frightening, something you don't understand? If you do, please listen to the true story of plutonium.

The first big misconception about me is that if you have about 10 kilograms of plutonium you can easily make an atomic bomb. When people hear this, they think, "It would be terrible if some bad people made an atomic bomb out of this plutonium!"

But is it really possible to do such a thing?

Plutonium used in atomic bombs has to be at least 93 percent pure. Plutonium used in general reactors is at most 10 percent pure. So you can see that it would be extremely difficult to make an atomic bomb out of this plutonium. Even if someone did want to make an atomic bomb from this material, he would need to have access to very complicated technology and large-scale facilities. And most important, plutonium is kept under strict security, so it is impossible to steal any.

The second misconception people have about

[Letter]

MY STALKER, THE CAR

From an unsigned letter sent in March by Fiat, the car manufacturer, to 50,000 young women in Spain. The letter was the first installment in a direct-mail campaign to promote the Cinquecento, a Fiat car. Although a second letter, sent a few days later, described the car in detail, the first letter, written on pink stationery, contained no mention of the Cinquecento or Fiat. After several recipients notified the police that they were being stalked, Fiat apologized and explained that "the anxiety of modern urban life produced a reaction we hadn't intended." Translated from the Spanish by Daniel Zalewski.

Yesterday we saw each other again. We passed each other on the street, and I noticed that you were looking at me with interest. So far, our relationship has been nothing more than that. I don't want it to continue that way.

I need to get to know you and I want you to get to know me, too, because I am sure that we are made for each other. I have an idea. Since neither one of us has to commit to the other, how about a little affair?

Try me. If I am not what you have been looking for, we can forget each other. But if we do connect, I promise a long and stable relationship. If you happen to see me again, don't just pass by. I only need to be with you for a few minutes. Even if it doesn't work out, I promise that you will never forget our little experience together.

You will hear from me very soon.

SMOG REDUCTION: A SIDE EFFECT

A

THE GUN LOBBY MOVES IN FOR THE KILL

C


ABSOLUT APPEAL.

has been destroyed, or has otherwise been effectively neutralized. Only then do we move on to another Prime Target.

At this point the question is, Why should Second Amendment groups get involved in recalling David Roberti? There are a number of reasons.

1. First, most of our politicians are basically political prostitutes. Their primary objective is to get elected and re-elected so that they can continue to enjoy the power, influence, prestige, and money that holding office yields. They often use legislation and regulation as a means of generating cash and influence.

It seems that there is no money in supporting gun control. Or is there? The attractiveness of supporting gun control is not that it yields large direct cash contributions. Its appeal stems from what are effectively enormous but unreported contributions of favorable publicity from the media for those who follow the "politically correct" agenda of the "religious left" (or the "police state right"). The financial value of these in-kind contributions from the media far outweighs the financial resources of the pro–Second Amendment movement as it exists today.

It is clear that the only way we can win this war is by changing the rules of engagement. With limited resources, it is essential that we identify targets of opportunity among opposition leaders and follow up with unrelenting and brutal attacks. We need to take them out to set an example for others; to show that there's an unacceptable price to pay for subverting the Constitution as a trade for favorable media exposure. We have to put the fear of God back into them. We have to engage the enemy, to work the enemy, to get in so close we can smell 'em. We need to break his will to fight us.

2. We have a prime target of opportunity—David Roberti—and we have a method to change the rules of engagement: recall. The unique structure of a recall election [the incumbent is required to win more than 50 percent of the vote to retain his or her seat] puts Roberti at the disadvantage of having to do way better than he did in either of his previous two engagements with CAC. [CAC opposed Roberti in his 1992 election, in which he received 34 percent of the vote, and in the resulting runoff, in which he received 43 percent of the vote.] Roberti is "doable." He's been through hell—and he looks like it too. The message is getting through.

3. Perhaps the most important reason to join the recall campaign is [to re-energize] the grass roots of the pro–Second Amendment community, particularly in California. Over the last few years, the Second Amendment has been kicked in the teeth in California. The NRA was unprepared for the post-Stockton onslaught of gun-

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P

Md. town house. She hears a commotion
in front of her row of town houses, and several men

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PRAGUE'S ROCK 'N' ROLL HIGH SCHOOL

REALLY DEFENSIVE DRIVING

From "More Tactical Tips," in the 1994 edition of The Complete Book of Handguns, *by Massad Ayoob, an annual published by Harris Publications, in New York City. Ayoob is a self-defense instructor and serves as an expert witness in trials involving self-defense issues.*

These days carjacking is the big public concern for drivers. However, an even greater threat is the "smash and grab": the bad guys break through your closed window and grab your valuables, knowing that you're going to be stunned and perhaps blinded by bits of flying glass. One [illegible] using these days is to throw spark plugs at your window; they're so hard they can even shatter safety glass. And we've all read about punks who throw rocks at car windows or drop cinder blocks onto vehicles from overpasses.

Of late, I have made a point of keeping several pairs of clear, shatterproof shooting goggles in my cars. I require my kids to wear them, and I offer them to other passengers. The reason? Protection from flying glass. Eye protection is also critical if someone should fire at your automobile; a bullet that misses you can still send bits of glass, sometimes powder-fine, flying into your eyes in the wake of the projectile.

In general, any good driver should always be doing a 360-degree scan of the area he's in. In dangerous neighborhoods, the passengers should be doing the same thing. And when you're a passenger in an unfamiliar car, make sure you memorize by feel where the seat-belt release is: if there's an emergency and you have to exit quickly, you won't have time to look down.

Similarly, memorize where the locking buttons and door handles are. A friend of mine was riding with a friend of his, a policeman, in a patrol car when they drove into an armed robbery in progress. It turned into a high-volume gunfight. My friend clawed desperately at the door trying to get out and engage the perpetrators, but he couldn't find the door handle. My friend wasn't shot, but he'll never get into a car again without memorizing where the locks and handles are. Learn from his experience.

Should your car windows be up or down? That will depend on the situation, which you'll have to read for yourself. A window *up* will keep grabby hands out of the car. A window *down* lets in more warning sounds from outside; it also gives you more latitude to return fire.





Mao with Colonial Lamp, Chair, and Red Image of Mao Wearing [illegible] Post-1989, *published by Hanart TZ Gallery, in Hong Kong. The paintings are part of a series of portraits by Youhan* [illegible] *depict the figure of Mao* [illegible]

[Brochure]

THE FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE WEST

From a brochure for European Connections, *a quarterly photo-catalogue of 200 women from Russia and Eastern Europe, "ranging in age from 20 to 40 and from all walks of life." For a fee of $8 to $15 per name, an American man can order the address of any woman in the catalogue and begin a correspondence.* European Connections *is published in Atlanta.*

[illegible]

Why Russian ladies are so desirable

Unlike Americans, they understand the realities of life all too well, and their expectations are far more reasonable. They are unpretentious and down-to-earth, and their view of relationships has not been ruined by feminism. They have not yet been subverted by the media and remain highly educated, cultured, and conversational. Also, the American glorification of wealth does not exist in Russia. Traditionally, a Russian lady expects to marry a gentleman who is ten to twenty years older than she is. Furthermore, because of health factors—pollution, stress, poor diet, alcoholism, etc.—American men have a ten-year cosmetic advantage over Russian men. Recently, an ordinary American accountant married a famous Russian actress. Although this may not be your ideal, it shows the potential for finding a lady far above one's expectations.

Why Russian ladies find you desirable

[illegible] American; the ladies consider it quite an honor to have a Western boyfriend. In public they will always take your hand or arm proudly. These ladies are not poverty-stricken or desperately seeking a way out of Russia. They come from the elite class and just want to find the right man. You are everything the Russian man is not: sophisticated, energetic, financially secure, considerate, and *sober*.

[illegible]

"I was 45 years old and for the previous ten years I had failed to meet a lady of quality. Such ladies were either married or thought I was too old. A journalist by profession, I traveled to Russia [illegible] amazed to find ladies looking *at* me, not through me. Even though, by American standards, I am average in appearance, I became a desired man about-town. It was like a dream. And, indeed, I met the girl of my dreams—and she feels the same way about me! In America I wouldn't even entertain the thought of approaching such a lady. My message to you frustrated American men [illegible] Look eastward for the fulfillment of your dream."

THE MYTH OF COMPETITIVENESS

Adapted from "Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession," by Paul Krugman, in the March/April issue of Foreign Affairs. *Krugman is a professor of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the author, most recently, of* Peddling Prosperity: Economic Sense and Nonsense in the Age of Diminished Expectations.

The notion of competitiveness—the idea that, in the words of President Clinton, each nation is "like a big corporation competing in the global marketplace"—has become pervasive among opinion leaders throughout the world. People who believe themselves to be sophisticated about the subject take it for granted that the economic problem facing any modern nation is essentially our struggle to compete in world markets—that the United States and Japan are competitors in the same way that Coca-Cola and Pepsi are. Every few months a new bestseller warns the American public of the dire consequences of losing the "race" for the twenty-first century. A whole industry of councils on competitiveness, "geo-economists," and managed-trade theorists has sprung up in Washington. Many of these people—including health-policy guru Ira Magaziner, Council of Economic Advisors Chair Laura D'Andrea Tyson, and Labor Secretary Robert Reich—are now in the highest reaches of the Clinton Administration formulating economic and trade policy for the United States.

But the idea that a country's economic fortunes are largely determined by its success on world markets is a hypothesis, not a necessary truth; and as a practical, empirical matter, the hypothesis is flatly wrong. That is, it is simply not the case that the world's leading nations are to any important degree in economic competition with one another, or that any of their major economic problems can be attributed to failures to compete in world markets.

Trying to define the competitiveness of a nation is much more problematic than defining that of a corporation. The bottom line for a corporation is literally its bottom line: if a corporation cannot afford to pay its workers, suppliers, and bondholders, it will go out of business. Countries, however, do not go out of business. They may be happy or unhappy with their economic performance, but they have no well-defined bottom line.

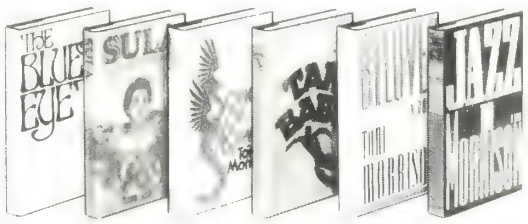
One might suppose, naively, that the bottom line of a national economy is simply its trade

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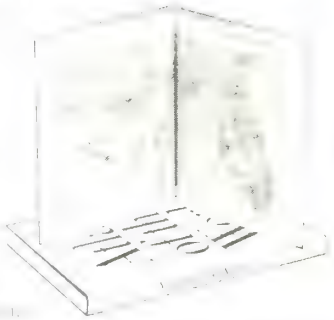
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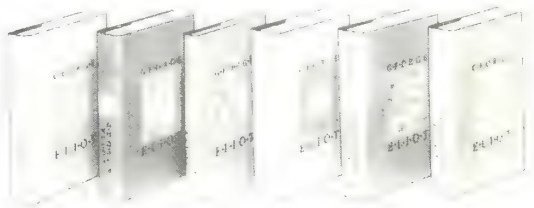


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large trade deficits after 1990 as foreign investors recovered confidence and began to pour in new funds. Would anyone want to describe Mexico as a highly competitive nation during the debt-crisis era or describe what has happened since 1990 as a loss in competitiveness?

Most writers who worry about the issue at all have therefore tried to define competitiveness as the combination of favorable trade performance and some other factor. The most popular definition of competitiveness nowadays runs along the lines of the one given in Laura D'Andrea Tyson's book *Who's Bashing Whom?*: competitiveness is "our ability to produce goods and services that meet the test of international competition while our citizens enjoy a standard of living that is both rising and sustainable." This sounds reasonable at first. But if you think about it, and test your thoughts against the facts, you will find out that there is much less to this definition than meets the eye.

Consider, for a moment, what the definition would mean for an economy that conducted very little international trade, like the United States in the 1950s. In such an economy, the growth in living standards—and thus "competitiveness," according to Tyson's definition—would be determined almost entirely by domestic factors, primarily the rate of productivity growth. In other words, for an economy with very little international trade, "competitiveness" would turn out to be just another way of saying "productivity" and would have nothing whatsoever to do with international competition.

But Tyson might argue that this changes when trade becomes more important, as indeed it has for all major economies. Let's examine this hypothesis. Suppose that a country finds that although its productivity is steadily rising, it is forced to devalue its currency in order to sell its exports on world markets. Would it not find its standard of living, which depends on its ability to purchase imports as well as domestically produced goods, actually declining?

Well, there is no reason to leave this as a pure speculation; since the dollar has, in fact, been devalued repeatedly since 1970, this hypothesis can easily be checked against the data. Have dollar devaluations in fact been a major drag on the U.S. standard of living?

The answer is no. These successive devaluations of the dollar have reduced U.S. real income by only about 2 percent from what it would otherwise have been. The reason? Even today, U.S. exports represent only 10 percent of the GNP. That is, the U.S. economy is almost 90 percent self-contained, producing goods and services for its own use. Similar calculations for the European Community and Japan yield similar results. In each case, the growth rate of living

ALL YOU NEED IS MARKETING

This is a simulated motion picture created by Primo Angeli, a firm of "designers for marketing and communications" based in San Francisco. Primo Angeli's clients include the Continental Baking Company and the Miller Brewing Company.

For years the industry has said: In the marketing department, the product. If that's the case, they're saying that it's their why not turn things around? Why not first develop finished-looking packages with highly packages over to R&D. Ask them to make a product that fits the pre-tested, pre-approved package.

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RapidAccess approach reverses the role



"In Confidence," by Linda Eveleth, is an elaboration of her primary [illegible] landscape that was [illegible] at Aaron Gallery, in Boston. Eveleth lives in Sherborn, Massachusetts.

standards essentially equals the growth rate of domestic productivity—not productivity relative to competitors but simply domestic productivity. National living standards are overwhelmingly determined by domestic factors rather than by competition for world markets.

So why are people apparently so anxious to define economic problems as issues of international competition? The competitive metaphor—the image of countries competing with one another in world markets in the same way that corporations do—derives much of its attractiveness from its seeming comprehensibility. Tell a group of businessmen that a country is like a corporation writ large, and you give them the comfort of feeling that they already understand the basics. Try to tell them about economic concepts like comparative advantage, and you are asking them to learn something new. It should not be surprising if many prefer a doctrine that offers the gain of apparent sophistication without the pain of hard thinking. The rhetoric of competitiveness has become so prevalent, however, for three deeper reasons.

First, competitive images are exciting, and thrills sell tickets. The subtitle of Lester Thurow's bestseller, *Head to Head*, is "The Coming Economic Battle Among Japan, Europe, and America"; the jacket proclaims that the "decisive war of the century is being waged right now . . . and we may have already decided to lose." Suppose the subtitle had described the real situation: "The coming struggle in which each big economy will succeed or fail based on its own efforts, pretty much independently of how well the others do." Would Thurow have sold a tenth as many books?

Second, the idea that U.S. economic difficulties hinge crucially on our failure in international competition makes those difficulties seem easier to solve. The productivity of the average American worker is determined by a complex array of factors, most of them out of reach of any likely government policy. So if you accept the reality that our "competitive" problem is really a domestic productivity problem pure and simple, you are unlikely to be optimistic about any dramatic turnaround. But if you can convince yourself that the problem is really one of failures in international competition—that imports are pushing workers out of high-wage jobs, or that subsidized foreign competition is driving the United States out of the high value-added sectors—then the answers to economic malaise may seem to you to involve simple things like subsidizing high technology and being tough on Japan.

Finally, many of the world's leaders have found the competitive metaphor extremely useful as a political device. The rhetoric of competitiveness turns out to provide a good way either to justify hard choices or to avoid them. For example, the well-received presentation of Bill Clinton's initial economic program in February 1993 showed the usefulness of competitive rhetoric as a motivation for tough policies. Clinton used this language when he proposed [illegible] spending cuts and tax increases to reduce the federal deficit. Why? The real reasons for cutting the deficit are disappointingly undramatic: the deficit siphons off funds that might otherwise have been productively invested, and thereby exerts a steady if small drag on U.S. economic growth. But Clinton was able instead to offer a stirring patriotic appeal, calling on the nation to

...musts think that this sort of po-
...ersistitue the emphasis on competi-
...I say argue that although the rhetoric
...erates world trade as a high-stakes com-
...on, is false, it is a noble lie that helps our
...ers persuade the public to do what needs to
...be done. But I believe that this indulgent view
is not only deeply cynical but harmful.

An obsession with international competition is not the same as old-fashioned protectionism, but it can all too easily lead to the same result. If you think of world trade as a "win-lose" struggle, not the mutually beneficial web of interdependence it really is, you are inevitably going to be tempted to do whatever is necessary to win that imagined struggle—even if that means threatening to raise tariffs and provoke a trade war, as Clinton has, and being prepared to wage such a war if your bluff is called. The world trading system [illegible] that is beneficial not only to the U.S. economy but to [illegible]. The rise of the doctrine of competitiveness has greatly increased the risk of a breakdown in that system—a breakdown that would have ramifications for years to come.



[Essay]

QUITTING: HARDER THAN IT LOOKS

From "On Quitting," an essay in the premiere issue of Quitter Quarterly, *a 'zine published by Shelley Ross and Evan Harris, in Brooklyn, New York.*

The option of quitting has long been undervalued and underused. Many of quitting's detractors insist on the moral superiority of "sticking it out," whereas natural quitters fear expending the energy it takes to quit. Between the two camps, actual quitting falls through the cracks.

Lazy but lapsed quitters should not confuse their indolence with their desire to quit. In fact, laziness is contrary to quitting because it precludes the activity of quitting. Laziness can occur only before and after quitting, not during it; quitting is an essentially active, not idle, pursuit.

First, the quitter thinks about quitting. This stage includes contemplating unhappiness, frustration, and shame, and dwelling on discomforts, injustices, and boredom. It can satisfy the quitter for months or even years. Next, the quitter fantasizes about methods of quitting. This is often the most creative part of the process, and many quitters draw it out, letting the imaginative quality that is inherent in many quitters come to the fore. Finally, the quitter quits.

Like all activities, quitting is tiring. Although some quitters, upon quitting, feel exhilarated, many quitters experience exhaustion that can spill into aimlessness. The following are suggestions for combatting post-quitting lassitude:

• Tell everyone you know that you have quit. Because of the stigma attached to quitting, many quitters deny themselves the pride and gratification of quitting. Tell someone who you know will disapprove, and go into detail. Tell someone who you know will approve and let him or her congratulate you. If your friends already know you quit, tell them again. Send reminders, call to discuss the circumstances of your quitting, invite people to your house and dwell on whatever you quit.

• Think about quitting something else. This will remind you of how motivating the process is. Don't worry about the end result or the actual act of quitting. Think about quitting something you like and have no intention of quitting: if you're madly in love, think about leaving; if you live in a great house, think about moving; if you're reading a good book, think about putting it down.

• Encourage someone else to quit. Try to witness his or her quitting. Even vicarious quitting is better than no quitting at all.

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5 Our **construction** is absolutely top-rate. Of all the bags, only this one is made of substantial 600 Denier poly/canvas. This material gives the rich look of canvas, but with the incredible toughness and water resistance of synthetic. Inside is our distinctive logo lining, in water-resistant nylon.

6 All rolling carriers give you a clear ID pocket. But we also throw in a complimentary business card-size **luggage tag** as well. Complete with buckle, it's a stylish accessory that helps prevent possible loss should you check it.

7 Our carrier is a full size 22" [illegible] *size possible* that fits under the seat or in the overhead, yet the price is still only $149.95.

8 Definitely, we have **better padded handles**, 3 in all: one extendable, one on top, and one on the side. Other handles are flat, or flimsy; ours are thick, feel good in your hand, and have *four* metal bolts [illegible] they will never fail or come loose.



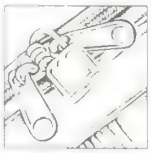
9 You get [illegible] and **diversity of pockets** in our unique design. There's even a full size mesh carrier for dirty laundry (or whatever you choose). Competing units don't have so many pockets, or this clever mesh section.



10 Now look at the **wheels** and feet. Our [illegible] made to keep your bag [illegible] paddles or city grime. This is a great improvement. The wheels on other units drag your carrier through puddles.



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[Encounter]

A BULL MARKET IN WEIRDNESS

From "The 1993 FT Index," in the February/March issue of Forte in Times, *a bimonthly magazine of strange phenomena and experiences, curiosities . . . and portents," published in London. Using news reports, the magazine's editors tracked trends in thirty-four categories of phenomena, including crop circles, mass deaths, "water monsters," and spontaneous human combustion, as well as those listed below. From these figures, the magazine calculated a worldwide "increase in strangeness" of 3.5 percent from 1992 to 1993.*

[illegible] and so forth found in spontaneous or natural forms or arrangements of things, as well as the finding of "holy" images on unlikely objects; e.g., Jesus appears in a photo or on a potato chip.

1993 example: A credible image of a lion's head formed in a grease stain on a glass in Cyril Legge's dishwasher. Cyril, of Liverpool, also found a figure of a Christlike man on another glass.

Trend: Falling.

[illegible] Extraordinary and extreme acts and beliefs, from amusing robberies with vegetables, through the social nuisances of toenail-painting fetishists, to grim feats of self-mutilation.

1993 example: Nigerian police arrested a transvestite who claimed to have murdered 200 people. He was, he said, a water goddess disguised as a woman to lure men to the river to suck their blood.

Trend: Rising.

LUCK—The entire genre of coincidence (holes in one at golf, being dealt a complete suit in bridge, "miraculous" escapes from injury, etc.).

1993 example: Chris Saggers plunged 220 feet from a Manchester tower and broke his fall on the roof of a car below. The roof completely caved in, and Chris walked away saying he felt "fine."

Trend: Rising.

FALLS—Falling frogs and fish, stones, ice lumps, colored rain, and related meteorological oddities.

1993 example: Constable Eric Asjes was surprised when he was rained on by two-inch-long freshwater bream in a remote area of Australia.

Trend: Falling.

[illegible] AND SUICIDES—Bizarre suicides, suicide waves, mass suicides; also, ludicrous exits and appropriate deaths of iconoclasts, blasphemers, and other taunters of the Fates.

1993 example: For fifty-six days the body of Thakur Balak Brahmachari was kept on ice by followers of his Hindu sect, who believed he would rise from the dead; 1,200 police battled 4,000 devotees to enforce the guru's cremation.

Trend: Rising.

HOAXES AND PANICS—Any bizarre belief, suspicion, story, or rumor that is largely unverifiable; also, deliberate hoaxes. Crop circles and UFOs excluded.

1993 example: In Cairo and other towns in Egypt, 1,300 schoolgirls were affected by nau[illegible] and fainting fits, which closed thirty-two schools. "Mass hysteria" was blamed.

Trend: Rising.

[illegible]

BROOKFIELD'S MERRY PRANKSTERS

From a list of prank phone calls compiled on April Fools' Day by the receptionist at the Brookfield Zoo, Brookfield, Illinois. The zoo estimates that it receives 2,000 prank calls each April Fools' Day; the list below includes some of the "people" to whom [illegible]

[illegible]

Bob Katz

Betty Low

[illegible]

[Encounter]

L'AMOUR DU FROMAGE

From "Slice of Life, Wedge of Brie," a chapter in Tales of a Greasy-Spoon, *by Bruno Gheerbrant, a self-published booklet distributed by Les Bizarres Press, in San Francisco. Gheerbrant moved to the United States from France in 1989.*

The action takes place in a Food for Less supermarket down on Fourteenth and Folsom. I'm going to the aisle where they display the cheese, to indulge in the last remnant of my French self. America has taken my language, America has taken my self-confidence, Amer[illegible] has taken my identity, but America has not



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Mammoth, CA. "After Snowstorm," by Macduff Everton. Everton's photographs are currently on display in "Santa Barbara Connection," a gro
at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, in California. He lives in Goleta, California.

yet taken Brie cheese away from me.

As soon as I reach the refrigerated display stand, I grab a wedge of "Tradition de Belmont," a soft ripened Brie, and expertly press it between my thumb and my index finger, to check its consistency. "Tradition de Belmont" is the only American cheese that comes close to the real thing and still fits within my budget. Shamelessly, just as I used to do in the open markets in the south of France during the summer, I bring the cheese to my nose and sniff it like a maniac, trying to judge by its scent if it's old enough.

Seeing my trouble, a woman comes to my rescue and tells me with a strange accent, "It's not very good cheese. You know, it always tastes a bit like plastic."

Who is this woman who dares to think she might tell a Frenchman what a good cheese tastes like? Still, her accent intrigues me.

"Where are you from?" I ask her.

"I'm from France," she replies. I start to laugh. It is so unrealistic, and at the same time it makes sense. Where else but in a supermarket cheese section would I meet a French person? I switch

"How long have you been here? Oh! You're a

swers in English; I switch back to French. I say something banal. We don't say anything. A minute passes.

She grabs a slice of Danish blue cheese and asks me, "Is this good? I've never had this."

I answer in French, "Oh, yes, it's kind of like a Bleu d'Auvergne except it's made in Denmark."

"Oh, really? You're sure it's not like a Roquefort? Because I don't like Roquefort. It's so strong."

Oh, my God! She hasn't said it, but it's understood between us that she knows what a Bleu d'Auvergne is. It's been so long since I've had a casual discussion about cheese. She has stabbed me. She's gone right to the core of my French being with that Roquefort. She has done no less than rip my heart out of my chest. All those emotions suppressed for so long—I'm surprised I can still feel them. She looks at me now. She looks at me as only Frenchwomen do. We talk about cheese, but it's only on the surface; beneath we talk about everything else. I'm having a communion of soul with her, I love her, I'm heartbroken. My French soul is screaming, reacting like dry soil thirsting for water for years and finally given a drink. She makes me feel like a man who could love, not like the emotional cripple I've become in my time here. I had forgotten that it can be simple and beautiful to be attracted to a woman.

But this is forbidden territory, those are taboo feelings. If I want to survive in the U.S.A., I can't afford to be French. Don't look at me, Marie-Ange. I turn my eyes away from her. I turn my body away. I turn my heart away. I go to the aisle where they sell ten-cent packages of noodles, to hide.

[Poem]

SUNDAY, TARZAN IN HIS HAMMOCK

By Lewis Buzbee. From the Spring ZYZZYVA, *a special "all colleague" issue of written work by people in the West Coast publishing industry and artwork by local gallery and museum employees. Buzbee, who until recently worked as a sales representative for Chronicle Books, in San Francisco, is the author of* Fliegelman's Desire, *a novel published by Ballantine.*

When the king of the jungle first wakes up, he thinks
it's going to be a great day, as laden with possibility
as the banana tree with banana hands, but by ten
he's still in the hammock, arms and legs dull as
termite mounds. He stares at the thatched roof and realizes
that his early good mood was a leftover from Saturday,
when he got so much done: a great day, he saved
the tiger cub trapped in the banyan, herded the hippos
away from the tourists and their cameras and guns,
restrung and greased the N-NW vines, and all by noon.
All day he went about his duties, not so much kingly duties
as custodial, and last night he and Cheetah went for a walk
under the ostrich-egg moon. This morning nothing stirs him.
The world is a stagnant river, a scummy creek's dammed pool.
Cheetah's gone chattering off, Jane is in town,
and the rest of the animals are busy with one another
fighting, eating, mating. Tarzan can barely move,
he does not want to move. Does the gazelle ever feel this
lassitude, does it ever want to lie down and just stare,
no longer caring for its own safety, tired of the vigilance?
Does the lion, fat in the grass, ever think, fuck it,
let the wounded springbok live, who cares?
Tarzan thinks maybe he'll go to the bathing pools
and watch the village girls bathe, splashing in the sun,
their breasts and thighs perfect. He wishes someone
would bring him a gourd of palm wine, a platter
of imported fruit—kiwi, jackfruit, tomatoes—
or maybe a bowl of steaming yams, slathered in
sweet butter.
Maybe Jane will bring him a book.
He hears far off in the dense canopy a zebra's cry for help,
those damned jackals again, but, no, he will not move.
Let the world take care of itself, let the world eat
the world. He can live without them, all of the wild.
He thinks.

[Historical Fiction]

THE HANGING

From the prologue to The Whipping Boy, *a novel by Speer Morgan, published by Houghton Mifflin. Morgan teaches writing at the University of Missouri, at Columbia, and is editor of* The Missouri Review, *a literary journal. The prologue is based on a hanging that took place in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1894.*

Midmorning on a late fall day in 1894, the sun was almost visible in thin clouds, and the sky over western Arkansas looked as if it was about to clear after days of on-and-off rain. But the air suddenly turned cool, and within an hour the sun's halo disappeared. In Fort Smith, a young murderer named Johnny Pointer was to be hanged at noon on the lawn of the old U.S. courthouse, a few hundred yards from the Arkansas River. It was the first execution ordered by Judge Isaac C. Parker in over a year, the longest interruption in his otherwise lethal twenty-year record on the bench. Newspapers from as far away as Boston had sent stringers to cover the event, which wasn't unusual for a Parker hanging. In a nation enveloped in a depression, a good hanging offered promise of spectacle, lurid detail, moralizing, sentimentality, and all the other elements of the best order of journalism.

At 10:30, hangman George Maledon appeared on the scaffold, a man of such slight build that he looked like a white beard on a stick. He adjusted the rope's length and checked the trap mechanism, which momentarily hushed the crowd when it chunked open.

Sightseers from the Cherokee and Choctaw Nations had come to see the white man hanged. The streets must have afforded curious sights to the Indian kids—buildings as high as six stories, a horsecar track, and the big crowd, variously described in news accounts as "more than five hundred souls" and "well above fifteen hundred." Monte sharks and patent-medicine salesmen

it like a man by sitting down and bursting into copious tears. The marshals briefly conferred, then picked him up bodily so Mr. Maledon could slip his carefully tarred rope over Pointer's head and secure the knot under his left ear. Maledon normally tied his client's legs and placed a black bag over the head, but this time he did neither. Pointer was putting up such resistance that Maledon wanted to finish the job as quickly as possible.

Desperately, at just the moment the diminutive hangman sprang the trap, Pointer got his hands loose and clasped his arms around one of the marshals, "retarding the felon's fall," as one reporter described it, "and causing the struggling marshal almost to plunge through with him."

The newspapers gave wildly different accounts of what happened next, but the primary fact was not disputed: the man who was to be ejected into hell at the hour of noon refused to die for forty-three minutes—a record by a good mark, even in the ample history of the Fort Smith gallows.

A half-hour after Johnny Pointer's mortal struggle began, Judge Parker was fetched at a board meeting of the Belle Grove School and asked what should be done about the unfortunate spectacle. His answer, as recorded by one reporter, was, "Let the son of a b— go all night. You may hire an orchestra for all I care."

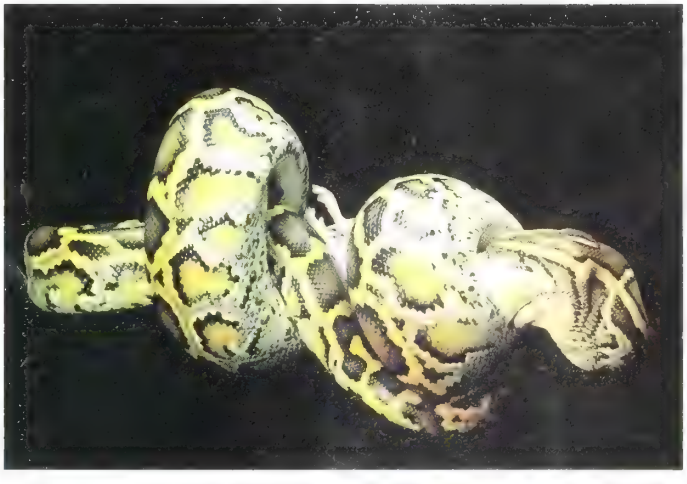
Parker would retire a little over a year after the Johnny Pointer hanging, with 174 convictions and 160 actual executions or jail deaths, the largest number of any judge in U.S. history, but his more remarkable accomplishment may have been how long he could talk, off the cuff, about disorderliness, drunkenness, murder, theft, rape, and the destruction of the Indian Nations by lawlessness. When delivering the death sentence to Johnny Pointer, he had subjected the poor hangee to the usual long lecture, at the end holding out hope for him that our Lord, whose court could offer the only appeal, might afford one last chance for eternal mercy to whoever repented his sins and took his punishment humbly.

Johnny Pointer, refusing to die, showed no inclination to follow this advice.

The tone of the newspaper descriptions of his forty-three-minute execution varied from the blackest moral outrage to the most whimsical carnival irony. It was noted that a large number of people in the crowd became ill, some with nausea, others with chills and fever and "sudden, catastrophic indigestion." Most of them did remain throughout the event, despite the increasing cold, the darkening sky, and the rain, which started after noon. A few younger witnesses mocked the hanging man in macabre cavortings around the gallows. This would later result in a peculiar high-kneed, walking dance called the Johnny Pointer, popular among children and teenagers in the border country as late as the 1950s.

CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION





e photographs above, of a Burmese python consuming a white rat, were taken by David Luttschwager and Susan Middleton. When the python attacks, trikes quickly, wrapping the rat in its coils in less than a second. Each time the rat exhales, the snake tightens its grip, constricting the animal's lungs il no oxygen remains. Once the rat is dead or unconscious, the snake begins the long process of devouring it: simply swallowing the rat can take a python eral hours; digestion can last as long as two weeks. Snakes rarely break the bones or tear the flesh of their prey, depending instead on their stomach acid dissolve what they have eaten. In one instance, the body of an Indonesian boy was cut out of a python's stomach two days after being swallowed, still ict but coated with a "dirty-looking slime." Pythons have been known to consume animals—and humans—that outweigh them, the largest recorded mal ever eaten by a snake was a 130-pound antelope, consumed by an African rock python. The photographs, with accompanying text by David Dia-nd, appeared in the April issue of Discover

CAN SEPARATE BE EQUAL?

New answers to an old question about race and schools

By James Traub

Forty years have passed since the U.S. Supreme Court declared, in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, that "in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place." No single decision the Court has rendered in this century has produced so profound a social upheaval. Hundreds of lawsuits later, black and white—and sometimes Hispanic—students are [illegible] desegregated [illegible] of Buffalo, Indianapolis, Louisville, St. Louis, Milwaukee, [illegible] ington, Las Vegas. The South, once the strongest [illegible] desegregated region of the country.



[illegible] By rooting the [illegible] the constitution [illegible] the law, the decision established civil rights as a fundamental [illegible] Rosa Parks sat down in the front of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and the then-unknown Martin Luther King Jr. led a boycott of the city's buses. It was King, ultimately, who demanded that America make good on *Brown*'s promise of simple justice [illegible]

dered was the desegregation of the schools; but what it stands for is the hope of redemption from our original sin of slavery and racism.

Redemption, of course, hasn't come. In the great cities of the Northeast and Midwest, blacks, as well as Hispanics, live in growing isolation and increasing poverty. Desegregation is swiftly becoming a dead letter in places like Milwaukee, where in a generation the school[s] have gone from mostly white to overwhelmingly minority. The practical barriers to desegregation are in many places so high that the moral clarity promised by *Brown*—a simple choice between segregation and integration, between racism and justice—has blurred.

The new choice, it seems, is between separate but equal and separate but unequal. This has proved to be a welcome state of affairs not only for white suburban parents frightened by the prospect of desegregation but also for black parents and activists who despair of integration or never believed in it in the first place. For them, separate but equal is not the cynical evasion the *Brown* decision sought to eradicate but a rallying cry. Black scholars like Derrick Bell have long pointed out that in *Brown* the Court didn't declare segregation an evil in itself but rather found that segregation conferred a ineradicable stigma of inferiority on black children. Now Bell and many others look on the claim as condescending and even racist. The spokesmen for all-black "academies," which have been instituted or discussed in Miami, New York

lwaukee, Detroit, and elsewhere, insist that
paration is a precondition for black self-esteem,
nd many blacks now look upon integration as a
hite plot to undermine racial pride. So desegregation, having lost its momentum, has lost its
nief constituency and beneficiary class as well.

This new separate-but-equal model is disrbing for those, like me, who grew up listening
Martin Luther King and who found in the re
mptive language of the civil-rights movement
virtual substitute for religious belief. It isn't
nly a way of schooling that's being repudiated;
s a way of living: to accept the new ideology of
paratism is to accept as well the growing obsession with racial and ethnic identity, and the
sumption that each group has its own truths,
s own values, even its own version of history.
esegregation has proved to be so agonizing and
impractical that it now seems almost perverse
resist the suggestion that, say, we lavish funds
n ghetto schools and let them develop on their
wn. But it is a bargain we may live to regret.

The desegregation battle is being waged in a
rprising number of places. Earlier this year I paid
series of visits to Hartford, Connecticut, a city
hat has been struggling to improve the dismal
rformance of its school system (in April, in
hat seemed a gesture of despair, the school
pard announced it was considering bringing in
private company, Education Alternatives, to run
ne city's schools) and is currently facing perhaps the most ambitious desegregation lawsuit
ed in recent years, *Sheff* v. *O'Neill*. Hartford has
virtually all-minority school system, surrounded by the virtually all-white systems of the suburbs, but *Sheff* is, pointedly, not about race but
bout isolation, and about the overwhelming
overty of the inner city. The decision in the
ase, filed in state rather than in federal court,
expected sometime later this year. A victory
r the plaintiffs would fill Hartford's suburbs
ith fear and trembling, but it might also offer a new way to think about desegregation.

On a cold morning this past February, Don
arso, principal of the McDonough Elementary
hool in Hartford, stood outside the dilapidated
d-brick pile of his school, greeting parents as they
rived with their children. Carso is a bespectacled middle-aged white man with thinning hair
nd a thickening waistline. It is his habit every
orning to remain outside until he has saluted every last parent. McDonough is 78 percent Hispanic, 14 percent black, and almost all poor. Carso
llooed a number of fathers in sweatshirts who
oked him over with sullen glares as they climbed
ck into their cars. "I treat them all like lawyers
nd doctors," Carso said, waving a cup of tepid cof-
e. "Most of them come around eventually."

Carso is the kind of principal pictured in the "effective schools" literature. He's omnipresent and indefatigable, he settles fights with Solomonic compromise, and he puts learning ahead of everything else. He treats McDonough like a sanctuary from the surrounding gloom. And it is—up to a point.

Construction of McDonough began in 1897, and portions of the building can be mistaken for a museum exhibition of nineteenth-century urban-school design. The cafeteria, in which 850 children are expected to eat breakfast and lunch—both provided free to almost all of the children, owing to the poverty of the students—is a basement classroom furnished with a half-dozen folding tables; sunlight barely flickers in through two windows. The boys' bathroom, next door, is a dim, high chamber. Instead of sinks it has a single long trough fitted with trumpet-shaped spigots. Only a few of the toilets have doors. The school generally runs out of toilet paper before the end of the year, and Carso has had to borrow money from another school to keep his own supplied. McDonough is so overcrowded that nearly 200 children attend classes in trailers, known as "portables," set up on what used to be the playground. Another couple hundred students go to school in another building a few blocks away, the former Moylan School, which is just as old and decrepit as McDonough.

"THE SOLUTION ISN'T IN THE CITY; MAYBE IT'S IN THE STATE," CARSO SAYS. "WE ARE SAYING TO OUR NEIGHBORS, 'TAKE OWNERSHIP OF OUR PROBLEM!'"

McDonough's condition, like the condition of elementary schools throughout Hartford's slums, is shameful—an example of the sort of "savage inequalities" that crusading writer Jonathan Kozol described in his book of the same name. But it only takes money to address physical neglect, and money can be a surprisingly elastic commodity. Thanks to a $205 million city bond issue, for which Carso helped drum up support, McDonough will have a new structure by 1997; Moylan, too, will be rebuilt and rechristened as a separate institution. McDonough will have an auditorium, a gym, and a cafeteria. Carso says he will make sure that his kids have just as many computers as the kids in Hartford's fancy suburbs. And he will then have a deeply troubled school in a pristine setting.

McDonough's Hispanic students, most of them Puerto Rican, tend to be recent arrivals whose parents speak little or no English. The families are nomadic, shuttling around Hartford's slums in search of an affordable apartment. Almost every morning, two or three or four kids show up at McDonough's door, standing shyly with an

raises the specter of forced busing. "It wasn't ev

hostility to mandatory desegregation; but he

in their environment. He even thinks ther

something to the idea of simply evacuating Ha

inner-city parents will bridle at the insult of or

way desegregation. Carso considers separate b

equal, or even separate but more than equal

colossal mistake; for all that he believes in l

school, he doesn't see how it can overcome t

world beyond his fingertip globe. "The solutio

he says, sitting in his tiny office during a br

moment of calm, "isn't in the city. Maybe it's

the state." Above all, Carso thinks, the soluti

has to lie with the wealthy suburbs that surroun

Hartford. "We are," he says, striking almost

pleading note, "saying to our neigh

The desegregation premise handed down

from Brown, the premise of the stigma of inferi

ority, has always contained an insulting infe

ence for many blacks. As Dr. Eddie Davis, th

principal of predominantly black Weaver High

School in Hartford, says, "It would be a tota

slap in the face to say that education can onl

happen in the suburban schools." Davis testi

as he said, "Wherever white children [are], ther

are resources." Davis would be just as happy t

have the resources in a segregated environment

he doesn't see isolation as a problem. And nowa

days, resources do not, in fact, follow white chi

dren as they once did. Derrick Bell has argue

that the great achievement of Brown was to mak

"it possible for black parents to gain an equa

educational opportunity for their children wher

ever these children attended school."

The declining prestige of integrationist

among blacks and the rise of new and sometime

virulent forms of ethnocentrism have a goo

deal to do with the growing acceptance of a new

separate-but-equal model, but so does the hope

fulness of an Eddie Davis. Davis considers him

self a disciple of the "effective schools" movemen

and it was the late Ronald Edmonds, a black ed

ucation scholar generally considered one of th

founders of the movement, who first formulate

a serious pedagogic argument for the irrelevanc

of desegregation. Edmonds took umbrage, as h

wrote in 1979, at "the conventional liberal wis

Black children depended on integration." A wel

in school could overcome whatever disadvanges children brought with them. There was no sound reason, Edmonds concluded, to stand in the way of the many black parents who preferred "racially distinct" schools for their children.

Edmonds's precepts have been institutionalized in groups like Theodore Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, which takes the demographic makeup of the schools for granted and tries to inuse those schools with the values and culture that are correlated with academic success. Weaver High School, for example, works with Sizer's group, and Dr. Davis has overseen a restructuring of his ninth- and tenth-grade classes. What really matters, Davis insists, is not race or even resources but academic rigor, high expectations, strong leadership, a willingness to experiment. But when I asked Davis how much academic improvement he had seen after five years of reform, he said that there hadn't been any yet. By the time kids reached ninth grade, he admitted, it was too late. In fact, Weaver wasn't altering trajectories any more than McDonough was. The students were scoring 150 points below the state average on the SATs. Perhaps no more than 20 percent of entering ninth graders would ultimately go on to four-year colleges.



Separate but equal may offer a salve to black pride and a comfort to white suburbanites; but there's not much proof that it works. In *The Closing Door*, Gary Orfield, a standard-bearer of white liberal integrationism, and co-author Carole Ashkinaze analyze the effects of the 1980 decision known as the Atlanta Compromise, in which that city's largely white power structure agreed to black control over the schools in exchange for an end to litigation that would have mandated desegregation throughout the metropolitan area. Here was separate but equal in laboratory form, presided over by a new black superintendent who had a national reputation as an educational reformer. Said former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young, "It was really the integration of the money to provide a quality education for all children that was black folks' goal. Racial balance was a means for achieving the goal." But despite an initial promise of success, Orfield concludes, "Huge numbers of children flunked grades and became more likely to drop out before completing high school," while "whites and middle-class blacks abandoned the city system in droves." Poor black students, in other

[illegible] cut off from the opportunity to develop, than they had been before.

Atlanta wasn't the only place where the resources, rather than the children, were desegregated. Over the [illegible] desegregation litigation has largely given way to suits seeking [illegible] districts. Connecticut, in fact, became one of the first states to engage in tax "equalization" as a result of a 1977 case, *Horton v. Meskill*. Thirty-six states either have agreed to equalize spending or are facing litigation that would compel them to do so. As with the Atlanta Compromise, the Connecticut measure essentially allows white suburbanites to pay a modest tax in order to keep racial lines intact. Michigan's Republican governor recently supported a move by the state legislature to equalize school funding by substituting the state sales tax for the local property tax as the source of school funding, creating a separate-but-equal status quo.

But what happens when inner-city schools reach funding parity with the suburbs and the poor kids are still riding a conveyor belt to a second-class life? This is where Hartford and *Sheff v. O'Neill* comes in.

Hartford was, for many generations, a flourishing medium-sized Yankee city. It had a fine old museum, a fine old library, a rivertront, and the headquarters of several of America's largest insurance companies. Today you can spend half an hour staring at the great Trumbull tableaux of

the Wadsworth
[illegible] at 9:00 P.M. with little
[illegible] at least from a car. The in-
[illegible] companies are still there, but the people
[illegible] downtown.
[illegible] Northeast and Midwest
[illegible] after World War II,
[illegible] then Puerto Ricans,
then Caribbeans, mostly from Jamaica, flooded in-
[illegible] and then to the tobacco
fields of the Connecticut Valley. (The local leaf
[illegible] for wrapping
cigars.) Thereafter the city
lost tens of thousands of
middle-class and working-
[illegible] families. Hart-
ford's population of 140,000
is now 69 percent non-
white. Hartford is, meredi-
[illegible] of the ten poorest
[illegible] America. Com-
[illegible] other inner-
cities, New Haven and
Bridgeport, are among the
poorest twenty. And yet Connecticut has the high-
est per-capita income in the United States.

"EVEN PARTS OF THEIR BODY THEY DIDN'T KNOW," HERNANDEZ TESTIFIED. "THEY DIDN'T KNOW THEIR UNDERCLOTHING, WHAT IT WAS CALLED"

In [illegible] civil rights lawyers expect the
[illegible] to do, depends a great deal on Hartford, to
"take ownership" of some of its problems. The sug-
gestion, in fact, has been made before. In 1965, a
study team from Harvard recommended a system
of "metropolitan cooperation," in which every
suburban school would
agree to take two stu-
dents from one of Hart-
ford's "poverty areas"
into each of its class-
rooms. By 1974, ac-
cording to the plan, the
suburbs would accom-
modate 6,000 inner-
city students, one-fifth
of the city's total stu-
dent population. The
[illegible] desegre-
gate the schools. At
the time, Hartford's
schools were almost perfectly balanced between
white and non-white students. The Harvard plan,
in fact, was "directed primarily to the amelioration
of the effects of poverty on education," as the au-
[illegible] The problem in the poverty areas was not so much that they were
[illegible] or Puerto Rican as that they were poor, and
[illegible]
[illegible] Although, through the state legislature ultimately au-
[illegible] program known as Project Concern,
which never sent more than 1,300 inner-city kids
to the suburbs in a year. (The number now hov-
ers around 650.) And the opportunity for real
change was quickly past. With an unexpected
increase in Puerto Rican immigration, and the
continuing departure of whites to the suburbs
and to parochial schools, the gulf between the
Hartford schools and the suburban schools—and
between the city and the suburbs—widened all
the more. Five years after the Harvard report
the Hartford schools were 67 percent non-white.
Hartford itself was a "poverty area."

By the late 1980s, Connecticut, despite its
reputation as a pasturage of
the white upper middle
class, had become a pow-
erful symbol of the John-
son-era Kerner Commission's
"two nations." The state's
three largest cities were
well on their way to be-
coming mass ghettos. The
next largest cities—Water-
bury and Stamford—were
becoming poorer and more
black. In 1988, Gerald
Tirozzi, then–state commissioner of education, is-
sued an impassioned report calling school segre-
gation "educationally, morally and legally wrong."
Tirozzi's language was unabashedly, and perhaps
naively, idealistic. He called on the state to ini-
tiate a desegregation planning process based on
the principle of "collective responsibility"—New
England communitarianism for an expanded
community. Tirozzi also had the monumental
incaution to suggest that the State Board of Ed-
ucation "be empowered to impose a mandatory
desegregation plan" should the voluntary plan
fail.

The moment the report appeared, Tirozzi lat-
er testified, "all hell broke loose." One state leg-
islator called for his resignation. As Tirozzi toured
the state, pleading his case, he discovered that
"the very word 'mandate' conjures up a feeling be-
tween and among citizens, parents, teachers that
really is very negative." Tirozzi, in short, was al-
most tarred and feathered. Governor William
O'Neill strongly objected to mandatory solu-
tions, and in a follow-up report the next year
Tirozzi proposed a series of voluntary measures;
even the word "desegregation" was stricken from
the document. Tirozzi had run up against the
hard kernel of resistance to a social policy that
required a serious degree of sacrifice from non-
beneficiaries. That was why desegregation has
always required court orders.

By openly indicting desegregation, however,
Tirozzi's report persuaded a group of lawyers from
the ACLU, the NAACP Legal Defense and Ed-
ucation Fund, and several other groups that the

t me was ripe to file a long-discussed class-
t on lawsuit. From the beginning, *Sheff* v. *O'Neill*
as a state rather than a federal case, for the
mple reason that the Supreme Court had long
nce foreclosed the sort of remedy the Tirozzi re-
ort had proposed. In 1974, the Court had de-
lared, in *Milliken* v. *Bradley*, that Detroit suburbs
ould not be compelled to pool their students
ith the city's without a finding of segregative in-
ent—a finding, for example, that the suburban
chools had been set up to permit
hites to elude integrated city schools.
his effectively meant that the Court
ould not disturb the single most
owerful impediment to further de-
egregation—the demographic forces
hat were rapidly dividing America's
etropolitan areas, including Hart-
ord, Bridgeport, and New Haven,
nto poor black inner cities and mid-
le-class white suburbs. But the Con-
ecticut constitution, like that of
many states, includes guarantees of
equal" and "adequate" education for
ll citizens; in fact, Connecticut is
nusual in that it guarantees non-seg-
egated as well as non-discriminatory
duction.

Sheff represents a new generation of
itigation not only because it's been
rought in state court but because it does not turn
n the dynamics of race and racism. The Hart-
ord schools are now equally divided between
lack and Hispanic students, and *Sheff* does not
rgue that either group is the victim of histori-
liscrimination. John Brittain, a University of
Connecticut Law School professor and a mem-
er of the plaintiffs' team, says, "The most signal
act about Hartford is not that it's 92 percent
on-white but that it's 63 percent poor." *Sheff* is
bout poverty, not race; it argues that poor chil-
lren need access to a non-poor educational en-
ironment, rather than that black children need
ccess to a racially integrated environment.

The trial was held in late 1992 and early 1993;
ost-trial hearings continued for another year.
he two sides called on so many of the leading
cholars in the field that the case, in effect, re-
apitulated the debate over desegregation, in
which scarcely anything seems to get definitively
ettled despite staggering research. Much of the
estimony detailed the stunning disparity be-
ween city and suburb. Hartford's schools are
2.1 percent non-white; the suburban districts are
2.6 percent white. In Hartford, 65 percent of the
hildren under the age of eighteen come from sin-
le-parent households; 41 percent of parents
ave not graduated from high school. In Glas-
onbury, a nearby suburb, the figures were 14
ercent and 9 percent. And socioeconomic sta-



Hartford students drop out before finishing high school and only 30 percent of graduates go on to attend four-year colleges. At Glastonbury High School, the dropout rate is about 1 percent, and more than half go on to a four-year college.

Some of the trial testimony was so piercing that people wept in the courtroom. Gladys Hernandez, who taught at an elementary school called Barnard-Brown, spoke of the school's grimed-over plastic windows and recalled that in twenty-three years she could never get the proper writing paper for her students. Most of the children, Hernandez said, were Puerto Rican, and spoke neither Spanish nor English properly. "They called everything a 'thing,'" she testified. "Even parts of their body they didn't know. They didn't know their underclothing, what it was called. If they had a grandparent, they didn't know that they were a grandson or a granddaughter." Once a year, Hernandez said, the school permitted her to take the children on a trip, to a zoo or a farm. "The most extraordinary thing [was] when they came to the river," she testified. "They all stood up in a group and applauded and cheered, and I was aware they were giving the river a standing ovation. And they were so happy to see the beauty of the river, something that most of us go back and forth [across] and never take time to look at."

The plaintiffs' expert witnesses argued that desegregation made a measurable difference in academic outcomes. Dr. Robert Crain, of Columbia University Teachers College, testified that school desegregation is correlated with later involvement in integrated colleges, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Students in Project Concern, he found, were much more likely to graduate from high school, and more likely to



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dents who stayed in Hartford schools. Mary [illegible] Research on Teacher Training, cited a study of federal survey data showing that poor children in schools with high concentrations of impoverished children were twice as likely to score below the national average as poor children in low-concentration schools; the effect on non-poor students was even more pronounced. Gary Orfield cited a number of studies that showed similar effects for both black and Hispanic students. [illegible] that additional spending on the schools produced no positive effect, and possibly even a negative effect, on outcomes, whereas low-income Hispanic students who transferred to mid- [illegible]

There's a strikingly conservative conclusion to be drawn from the irreproachably liberal Orfield's claim. It is values and culture, not resources, that determine academic outcomes, and middle-class children bring with them to

class success was virtually unimaginable. Eddie Davis would say that the cure for these harmful and limiting values lies in the culture of the school itself. But Carso's reluctant response was that even a well-run school cannot be impervious to the baleful influences of the world outside. And the concentration-of-poverty argument implies that all students suffer in a school where a large number of them are deeply disadvantaged.

But, of course, the inner-city children who go to a middle-class school during the day go home to their world of troubles at night. If McDonough can't shelter Connie from the effects of her chaotic home life, then is it reasonable to expect a suburban school to do much better? The defense in *Sheff* argued that neither Orfield's San Francisco study nor Project Concern showed any real correlation between desegregation and achievement, and it cited one respected study that concluded that "recent research has not lent credence" to the proposition that minority children are likely to be "influenced by their middle class peers' stronger orientation toward achievement." The state also relied heavily on the work of David Armor, a scholar who has carved out a perennial place for himself in desegregation cases by arguing that virtually all variation in academic outcome is determined by socioeconomic status. "A good strategy for improving the academic performance of students is to improve their socioeconomic conditions," Armor testified, adding that schools, of course, could not do much in that department.

Armor has been denounced as a hired gun and his research may be questionable; but it is undeniable that neither desegregation nor school reform, nor financing, nor any intervention, weighs very heavily in determining academic outcomes compared with a student's socioeconomic status. Even so pervasive an institution as school is less influential than a child's home and family environment. Acknowledging this truth, however, doesn't make school irrelevant; what it does mean is that the way you think about school must be linked to a larger design to uproot inner-city poverty. If it's true that what makes contemporary urban poverty so intractable is what Orfield calls "the self-perpetuating cycle of racial isolation," then the larger design must involve breaking that cycle. Certainly that's the way Don Carso or Gladys Hernandez would formulate the problem. And if you accept this finding—that racial iso-

lation and academic underachievement and poverty are inseparable—you conclude that although desegregation is only a partial solution, separate but equal is no solution at all.

The Hopewell School, in Glastonbury, is an idyllic place, set on sprawling fields that abut a seventeen-acre nature center. The classrooms are rich with computer power. Oddly enough, though, the Glastonbury schools actually spend slightly less money per capita than the Hartford schools. Much of Hartford's money, it's true, goes to security and special-ed and bilingual classes, rather than to teachers and textbooks. But Peter Maluk, Hopewell's principal, was not shedding crocodile tears when he took me on a tour of the school and pointed out all the things that Clark, its "sister" school in Hartford's slums, had and he didn't—a big library, an auditorium, a cafeteria.

The shortage of space obviously wasn't proving crippling. On the statewide math exam, 1 percent of Maluk's fourth-graders had scored in the remedial range; 59 percent had registered "excellent." His students did only a little bit worse in writing and reading. But Hopewell was not a more "effective" school than McDonough. The kids in Glastonbury were simply replicating their parents' success, as the kids in Hartford were on their way to replicating their parents' failure.

Peter Maluk is not unconscious of his good fortune and of the misery next door, but thinking about it makes him gloomy and fearful. He is a big man, slightly ponderous, with watery eyes. "Anything that's going to be forced is going to cause a lot of agitation," he said. He mentioned Boston; everyone in Glastonbury talked about Boston, which was only 100 miles away and whose mid-Seventies agon over forced busing had not faded from memory. When he talks about Hartford, the first thing that comes to his mind is "the gangs and the drive-by shootings." And this phrase, too, was used so often in Glastonbury that it might as well have been a single word with dashes in it. Many of these people work in Hartford, but from the way they talked about it the city might as well have been the nightmarish setting of *Blade Runner*. Maluk agrees that the kids in Hartford deserve something better; in fact, he said, he often found himself thinking of a half-serious suggestion he recalled William Buckley making in the late Sixties to the effect that poor children be taken from their parents and placed in a more suburbious setting. But coercing the inner-city parents didn't seem like a much better idea than coercing the suburbs. Maluk fetched a sigh and said, "There's a sense of hopelessness at times about how you reach a conclusion that works."

One of Hopewell's fifth-grade teachers, Cindy Dudley, who had helped forge the sister-school relationship with Clark, told me the kids from the two schools had recently had to meet at neutral locations, since many of the parents of Hopewell students were simply too freaked out by the nonstop accounts of gang violence and drive-by shootings. Even the year before, Dudley said, parents had written letters saying things like, "You warrant that the bus will drive to the front door of the school, that the children will proceed directly from the bus into the school . . ." Dudley shook her head at the pusillanimity. It was true, she admitted, that a little girl had been "abducted" across the street from the school; but the bus "always parks on the school side of the street." That must have soothed a lot of parental concern.

> MALUK FETCHED A SIGH AND SAID, "THERE'S A SENSE OF HOPELESSNESS AT TIMES ABOUT HOW YOU REACH A CONCLUSION THAT WORKS"

Glastonbury has been somewhat more willing to welcome the huddled masses of Hartford than it has been to join them. The town was one of the earliest recipients of students from Project Concern. Now there are some sixty students—from elementary through high school—attending Glastonbury schools through the program. Two Project Concern students I spoke to, both high school seniors, said that they had never experienced any racial tension at school. Other students, though, had objected when the drama club mounted a production of *Peter Pan* and all the Native Americans turned out to be African Americans. The superintendent had agreed that *Peter Pan* wasn't really an appropriate play, what with all the stereotypes.



Faced with the reality that suburban parents won't send their children to the inner city, frustrated proponents of desegregation, like Gerald Tirozzi or Don Carso, often suggest, half-seriously, that Hartford's schools, or even Hartford



of isolation that perpetuate inner-city poverty, then a largely one-way system isn't racist at all, though the burden may not be shared equally.

In his State of the State speech in January 1993, Governor Lowell Weicker made a startling admission: "The racial and economic isolation in Connecticut's school system is indisputable. Whether this segregation came about through the chance of historical boundaries or economic forces beyond the control of the state or whether it came about through private decisions or in spite of the best educational efforts of the state, what matters is that it is here and must be dealt with." According to Gerald Tirozzi, Weicker had initially thought of admitting the state's guilt in *Sheff v. O'Neill*. In the end, he backed off, granting the justice of the complaint while excusing the state from actual culpability. Weicker proposed that the state do voluntarily what it might otherwise be compelled to do at the end of the judicial sword. He suggested that the state be divided into regions, and that each of these regions initiate a planning process that would result in the establishment of numerical goals for desegregation. It was an amazingly bold proposal; however, by the time the state legislature got through with it, the numerical goals were gone, as was the very word "desegregation."

I attended a few of the early meetings of the local advisory committees that form the base of Connecticut's voluntary process; they did not inspire hope. The Glastonbury committee, rather than devising means of bringing more minority students to the town's schools, or more minority families to the town itself, was engaged in a dishonest liberal dither over the supposed instance of racism, like *Peter Pan*, that made the school inhospitable to the few minority students already there. The Hartford committee, rather than pondering the means of access to the suburban schools, was drawing up a mock-epic listing of the city's attractions, the lures with which it would woo suburban students—the parks, the symphony, the river, the municipal golf courses, "the video collection in the public library," the "fire safety company." By the end of the evening they were touting "the only [illegible] in the region." It was a perfect proof of the futility of voluntary solutions, but

ney were doing precisely what the legislation had proposed. Even people in and around Hartford who fear the stiff goad of judicial decree generally expect the voluntary process to be a colossal waste of time.

Connecticut, then, is unlikely to desegregate of its own free will. The best that can be hoped is that should Judge Harry Hammer find for the plaintiffs in *Sheff*, he will craft a remedy with an eye to maximizing minority access to suburban schools, rather than sheer mathematical equality. In fact, John Brittain, the law professor who has worked for the plaintiffs, suggests a remedy in which up to one quarter of Hartford's students would be dispersed to the suburbs while the state would fund the construction of ten new magnet schools located in desirable sites in Hartford, including the Trinity College campus and a site near Aetna's downtown headquarters. Even then, said Brittain, "racially identifiable" schools, both white and non-white, would remain. If this is too much collective responsibility to ask the suburbs to accept, then there's probably not much hope for desegregation.

One just criticism of mandatory-desegregation remedies is that they treat the symptom but not the disease; school desegregation, that is, has not produced residential desegregation. Blacks (and, to a lesser extent, Hispanics) are more intensely segregated than any American ethnic group has ever been, inhabiting a parallel, and very unequal, world of their own. Describing Atlanta, Gary Orfield wrote that housing patterns defined separate educational, social and economic worlds in which young people and their families had profoundly different sets of opportunities." Orfield has little to say about the self-destructive character of ghetto life, but perhaps what is usually described as "the culture of poverty" is, in fact, "the culture of isolation."

It is vain to expect schooling by itself to cure the pathologies of the inner city. Ghetto families need access to a middle-class setting even more than their children need access to a middle-class school. The peculiar American model of the impoverished central city ringed by prosperous suburbs not only isolates the urban poor in an abandoned world but ensures that the suburbanite will feel no sense of common destiny with the city-dweller; and, of course, it denies the city access to the resources of the white-collar class that it nourishes. In a new book, *Cities Without Suburbs*, David Rusk argues that the isolation and "hyperconcentration" of the poor in our great and growing urban ghettos create conditions that are impervious to reform and that ensure further ghettoization. The old cities of the Northeast and Midwest, Rusk says, cannot save themselves through such forms of internal development as enterprise zones, school reform, and so on. "In baldest terms," he concludes, "sustained success requires moving poor people from bad city neighborhoods to good suburban neighborhoods and moving dollars from wealthy suburban governments to poorer city governments."

Rusk's neo-integrationism will have to make its way in a hostile world. Many blacks now speak with an almost perverse longing of the good old days of legal apartheid, when the black community was, perforce, self-reliant and self-governing. It was also, of course, supremely unequal; and it tries the imagination to suppose that, with a fairer distribution of resources, inner-city Hartford and our innumerable other ghettos would rediscover their capacity for self-reliance. Separate but equal proposes to build on isolation, to accept it as a source of strength and solidarity. That claim, no matter how it is phrased, sounds like an admission of defeat.

And desegregation scarcely has a constituency at all among whites. Even liberals schooled on the struggle for civil rights have retreated in the face of black separatism; and the sort of "social engineering" epitomized by busing has fallen deeply out of fashion. In fact, the Democratic agenda on urban poverty has been borrowed in large part from neo-conservatives like Charles Murray, who insists that the only civil right that counts is access to the marketplace, and conservative educators like William Bennett, who believes that an infusion of character, of standards and self-discipline, is enough to save inner-city schools.

But what does all this talk about personal values, whether from the left or the right of the separate-but-equal spectrum, have to do with the children in Don Carso's class? It is not their fault that they arrive at McDonough already a year or two behind the children at Hopewell; and it's not McDonough's fault that they leave the school just as far behind, or worse. Even with more rigorous schooling and more computers, or more racial and ethnic solidarity, McDonough will not cure what ails these students. If equal opportunity means anything for these children and for others like them throughout urban America, it must mean access to a different environment.

SEPARATE BUT EQUAL PROPOSES TO BUILD ON ISOLATION AS A SOURCE OF STRENGTH; THAT CLAIM SOUNDS LIKE AN ADMISSION OF DEFEAT

In the forty years since *Brown*, desegregation has not become irrelevant. But the *idea* of desegregation has been shaken by a crisis of faith, and by a contraction of sympathies. A teacher at McDonough, surveying the farcical deliberations of Connecticut's voluntary process, says sadly, "There's not enough good will to go around." The remark has an ominous ring of truth. ■

DEATH OF A GIANT

Stalking the disappearing bluefin tuna

By John Seabrook

Steve Weiner sprays his sunglasses with Windex, polishes them, holds them [illegible] sun, sprays and polishes and inspects them again. The glasses, which have po[illegible] leather flaps on the sides to keep out the light, are necessary for looking through the shield of glare on the surface of the ocean and seeing the tuna underneath. Ahead of the *Elizabeth Ames*, due east, is the open ocean. Boothbay Harbor, Maine, is a white smudge at our stern. Brooks Weiner, wearing glasses like his brother's, swings into the cabin and punches a few coordinates into loran. Then he looks through the wheelhouse glass and says, "Sure would be nice to get onto the mother lode with no one else around."

The most valuable wild animal in the world is not the white rhino, which is killed for its horn, nor the leopard, which is killed for its hide, nor the brown bear, which is killed for its gallbladder. [illegible] At the Tsukiji tuna auction in Tokyo it is not unusual to see a single giant bluefin tuna sell for $30,000. A few years ago, one giant sold for $83,500. Some giants, however, sell for a mere $3,000; much depends on [illegible] That is what the Japanese pay so much money for. The fattest part of a giant tuna is the meat running in a diagonal stripe across its belly, which the Japanese call *toro*. In Japan there is a vocabulary to describe the belly of a giant tuna that is as rich as our vocabulary about wine. A good piece has a kind of glistening fish fat surrounding reddish-red and lustrous flesh, which is it[illegible] In it we are concerned with status in all [illegible] The chief symbol of giant tuna in Japan. "It is necessary to have a food with a higher status tha[illegible] any other, and that is the *toro* of the giant bluefin. Only a tiny percentage of the Japanese populatio[illegible] can afford good *toro*, which costs about $75 fo[illegible] two bite-size pieces and is available only in th[illegible] best sushi bars. "The very best *toro* you cannot bu[illegible] at all," Mr. Gunji says. "It is eaten in private din[illegible] ners by our politicians and business executives."

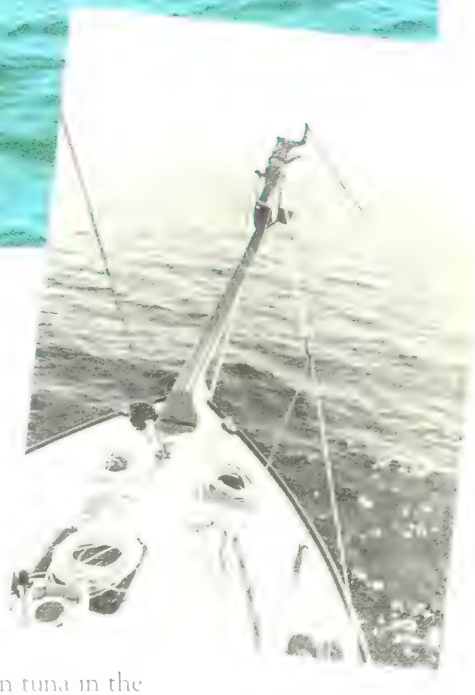
The most valuable giant tuna are caught off th[illegible] coast of New England and Canada, from Jun[illegible] through early November. The fish migrate her[illegible] each summer from the Gulf of Mexico to feed o[illegible] schools of herring, mackerel, butterfish, and po[illegible] gies living around the Georges Bank. The quan[illegible] tity of food, together with the cold water, make[illegible] the tuna fatter than hogs. Pulling a giant tun[illegible] from these waters is like going into a bank an[illegible] helping yourself to cash. A good-quality giant [illegible] a new car, a year's worth of boat payments, a win[illegible] ter vacation in the Caribbean. But there are no[illegible] many fishermen like the Weiners, who have th[illegible] gear and the expertise to catch giant tuna. Giant[illegible] tuna destroy nets, snap rods, and will fight o[illegible] the end of a line until their muscles burn up an[illegible] their hearts explode.

The Weiners are harpoon fishermen, which [illegible] to say they are more like hunters than fisherme[illegible] they stalk giant tuna in the open ocean. In a goo[illegible] season they will get around forty giants. Steve[illegible] forty-one, is three years older than Brooks, and [illegible] very much the older brother. When you talk [illegible] Steve, even when he's off the water, he alwa[illegible] seems to be scanning the horizon, searching for [illegible] fin or a little wake or some other sign of a fis[illegible] Brooks is more of a hothead. Brooks broke h[illegible] nose eight times playing hockey in college ("[illegible] good shot each time," he says) and has a th[illegible] white scar on his nose from reconstructive surger[illegible] He has a way of leading with his nose when he[illegible] talking to you. Also on board is Kevin Wilson, th[illegible]



Weiners' mate, who is up in the tuna tower driving the boat, and Chris, Steve's twelve-year-old son, who is in his berth reading a comic book.

The tuna tower is twenty-eight feet high and is accessible by wire ladders called ratlines. Scanning the water from this vantage point, Kevin says that this calm water is good for seeing tuna but that a little chop would make it harder for the tuna to hear the boat coming. Steve climbs the ratlines and he and Kevin stand with their backs to each other, facing port and starboard, turning their heads in 120-degree arcs over the gently shifting planes of water. Brooks is sitting in a sling just below them, scanning the forward arc. Timmy Voorhees, piloting the Weiners' spotter plane, seesaws in the sky overhead; his voice, with the drone of the airplane in back of it, occasionally sounds over a loudspeaker in the tuna tower. His conversations with Steve are electronically scrambled, so that other fishermen on the water can't hear them. Also in the tuna tower is a radio scanner, which crackles occasionally with the voices of other fishermen. Sometimes a fisherman will get excited, or forget, and talk on an unprotected channel about tuna he's seeing. Steve will slip a line through this piece of information and hang it up in his mind.



One reason why the price of bluefin tuna is so high is that there are so few of them left in this part of the ocean, and one reason why there are few of them left is that the price is so high. According to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, an organization that monitors and tries to regulate the fishery, the numbers of adult giant bluefin tuna in the western Atlantic Ocean have declined drastically since the mid-Seventies, when the Japanese market for these fish opened. A graph based on these figures looks like one of those charts of company earnings in business cartoons, with the head of the company perched on the window ledge about to jump out. On the left side of the graph, in the year 1970, the giant-tuna population is 220,000. On the right side of the graph, in the year 1990, the population has dropped nearly 90 percent and stands at less than 25,000. Of course, these numbers are hotly disputed by the Weiners



to that condition." Haddock, cod, redfish, hake, and pollack are down 80 to 90 percent from their and sharks are also severely depleted. The weak- Fishermen who are not much older than forty beach, of tuna blocking the breakwater at Provincetown. As recently as 1975 there was a near-coastal fishery for flounder off Cape Cod; hardly anyone catches a flounder there now. No one catches a halibut. More fishermen, more demand for seafood, and better technology for catching fish are the main reasons for these declines. The invention of loran, a navigational system that allows even the most unseafaring fisherman to know exactly where he is on the ocean at all times, has had a devastating effect on fish.

A whale sounds about a hundred yards off the starboard bow. Brooks says he doesn't care too much for whales, because the whale-watching boats scare the tuna. "The fish are acting real skittish," he says. "They're out here, though. Timmy says he's already seen three of them. Big ones. Slammers. Oh, there's fish out here, all right. Hey. Shark." He points toward the sickle-shaped fin slicing through the water.

Steve comes down and phones his tuna dealer, Robert Fitzpatrick, in Gloucester, Massachusetts. The tuna dealer tells Steve he has heard that another tuna fisherman had a big trip off Provincetown yesterday. During bad-weather days, when they are sitting at the dock, the Weiners reminisce about big trips, like the one a few years ago when the water turned green and the giants were "like blueberries in milk," as Brooks puts it. They stuck ten that day. Now Fitzpatrick reports that the other fisherman has stuck eight. Steve says, "Jesus. Eight." He looks stuck himself.

I ask Brooks and Steve why they want to catch tuna so much. Steve says, "I love these fish. But I love to catch them. God I love to catch them. And I know you need some kind of catch limit because I'd catch all of them if I could." He thinks for a minute. "Most guys I know don't do this for the money. They tell you they do it for the money, but it's not true."

Brooks says, "The money is just a way of keeping score. It's hard to explain what it is. It's weird. A lot of things come together when you stick a fish."

"I got tuna fish right under me!" Timmy Voorheis's voice crackles over the loudspeaker, sounding very excited. Steve steams at full throttle toward the spot where the plane is lazily circling. Brooks races out over the harpoon stand, braces himself in the pulpit, and picks up the harpoon. The harpoon is a twelve-foot wooden pole with an iron shank in the end and a harpoon dart in the end of the shank. The dart is made of white bronze, according to the Weiners' specifications, and is as sharp as a razor. An electrical cable connects the dart to a generator on board. Once a fish is stuck, the idea is to stun it quickly with a few jolts of electricity, then haul it up to the surface and kill it before it can come to its senses; otherwise the tuna will take off with the harpoon line—a giant can take out 600 feet of line in thirty seconds—and the men will have to haul it in, hand over hand.

Brooks spits on his hands and works the spit in- the pole. He holds the harpoon on the right side his body, left hand near the shank, right hand altway down the shaft, knees flexed, weight on is back foot. A good harpooonist—a man who is ood with the pole, as they say—can stick a fish hat is swimming twenty feet under water. At that stance, he must calculate the refraction of the ater and the speed of the fish and throw three or our feet ahead of where his eye tells him the fish . The best shot is a brain shot, because the elec- icity will fry it with minimum trauma to the eat. You don't want to throw at the tail, or you'll utton" the fish—throw the harpoon right rough it—and it won't get any of the juice.

Steve eases back on the throttle. Timmy's voice ys, "Okay, they're twenty lengths ahead of you. wo o'clock. Okay. Oh, they're maahnsters. Okay, fteen lengths now, one o'clock. Straight ahead ve lengths. Four. Three. Okay, look for color ow. Two lengths. One length. There he is!"

The giant tuna, seen from the perspective of the ying bridge, is a radiant yellow-and-blue shape, bout ten feet under the water. The immense ulk of the trunk, contrasted with the long, slen- er dorsal fin, gives the fish a singular appear- nce. Giant tuna have astounded human beings or thousands of years. The oldest Punic coins e engraved with tuna. Aeschylus compares the aughter of Persians by the Greeks at the Battle f Salamis to the butchering of tuna. Aristotle be- eved that giant tuna got so fat because they fed n acorns from oak trees that grew on the bottom f the ocean. Pliny the Elder describes a con- rontation between a school of giants and the eet of Alexander the Great that caused Alexan- er to draw up his ships in battle formation.

Brooks, leaning over the pulpit, throws the arpoon at the tuna. The colors shiver and dis- ppear. "Damn!" Brooks shouts into the water. Goddamn!" Timmy groans over the loudspeak- r. Brooks yells, "Did you see him look at me?" He is still staring down into the water. "He rolled over and looked me right in the eye!"

Back at the dock in Boothbay Harbor, Kevin nd Brooks make themselves busy stowing gear. wo little boys come down from the pier and atch them in awe; white grooves show in Kevin's rown face when he smiles at them. Young Chris Veiner gets out his rod and begins fishing for ackerel off the end of the *Elizabeth Ames*. Steve nd I, up on the pier above, talk about tuna. With one eye on Chris, Steve says, "Look. Fish- rmen are honest. Go up and down the coast nd ask about swordfish. Ask about groundfish. They'll tell you, 'Hey, these fish are in trouble.' But ll the guys I know are seeing as many bluefin as ney ever saw. They're maybe not catching them—but that's another story. You've got to remember, these fish are smart. They live for a long time—thirty, forty years. They've been fished year after year—some of the fish we're catching have been fished for longer than I've been fishing—and they've caught on. I think it's what happens with any wild animal. If you go into a forest where animals have never been hunted, you can get as many as you like, but after a while they're going to get shy. Also, a lot of guys who are tuna fishing now were in some other fishery five years ago. They were attracted to bluefin by the high prices. They're not catching any fish, because they don't know how to do it. So they tell their wives or their girlfriends that the reason is there aren't any fish anymore—to save face. It's not true. There are plenty of fish."

ONCE A FISH IS STUCK, THE IDEA IS TO STUN IT QUICKLY WITH A FEW JOLTS OF ELECTRICITY, THEN HAUL IT UP AND KILL IT BEFORE IT CAN COME TO ITS SENSES

Marine-fishery management has always rested on the assumption that the number of fish in the sea is limitless. Other of our natural resources—timber, bison, land, wild horses—used to be managed the same way, and each time we neared the end of the resource the philosophy changed. Ocean management has not yet changed, though it has begun to adapt. The ocean is still free, as it has been forever. Traditionally, if you wanted to buy a factory trawler, hire a crew of a hundred men, and go out and catch tens of thousands of fish a day, you didn't have to pay the government anything for using the resource—no rent, no special taxes. In fact, the government would help set you up in business with tax incentives and low-interest loans. The principle of free use is codified in the Magnuson Act, which was passed by Congress in 1976 and is up for renewal this year. The guidelines that were developed to interpret the act say, "Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing, while achieving the optimum yield." "Optimum yield" is one of those government phrases that are almost perfectly nonspecific. It is defined in the guidelines as "the maximum sustainable yield, as modified by any relevant economic, social, or ecological factor." In practice, optimum yield has tended to work in the following way: the National Marine Fishery Service says that the yield of a particular species of fish is diminishing and quotas need to be set to recover the stock; commercial fishermen then say that for them, catching fewer fish constitutes a relevant economic factor, and the result is that no quotas are imposed.

From the perspective of fishery management, the basic problem with the Magnuson Act is that it places the short-term commercial interests of the fishermen above the biological interests of the

terests of the fishermen either. But the federal [illegible] commercial fish in U.S. Atlantic waters belongs to the regional councils, which are state-based organizations, and the regional councils are heavily [illegible] fishermen and seafood industries. There are a few exceptions, as with striped bass, but federal government has been unable to force the regional authorities to close or severely limit a fishery; most people agree that, as a result, the striped-bass population in the Atlantic has recovered dramatically in recent years.

Of the seventeen major fisheries in the world, nine are in severe decline, and four are commercially exploited. The collapse of the cod fishery on the Grand Bank, which is mostly in Canadian waters, has put more than 30,000 fishery employees out of work. Brian Tobin, Canada's minister of Fisheries and Oceans, said in a speech at the United Nations in March, "This is an ecological disaster. It is also a societal calamity. . . . What do you do if your life, your family, and your community are all linked to the fishery, but there are no fish . . . no fish today and maybe no fish ever again unless the little that remains is protected." The fishery on the Georges Bank, which has sustained generations of New [illegible] back to the pilgrims, will be closed to haddock fishing this year, and the cod and flounder populations are so severely overfished that a group of New England congressmen asked for emergency disaster relief for fishermen and the Clinton Administration later proposed a $30 million relief package. Dr. Carl Safina, a marine ecologist with the Audubon Society, says, "The fundamental importance of the closing of the fisheries on Georges Bank and [illegible] is admitting, de facto, that these natural resources, which were so rich that they propelled the economic development of this part of the continent for two centuries, are now commercially [illegible]

A LIGHT BREEZE SOUGHS THROUGH THE RIGGING. THE MONOTONY OF DRIVING AIMLESSLY [illegible] THE SEAS, AND THE UTTER [illegible]

"D[illegible]

Chris has a mackerel on the line. He wants his dad to come down and take the hook out, but Steve thinks it would be good for Chris to over[illegible] the boys who were watching Kevin are now watching Chris, so the pressure is on. "Go ahead," Steve calls out. "You can do it, Chris!"

"Dad, help me! Dad, he's bleeding!"

Another reason why fishery management is difficult is that anyone who objects to quotas can argue that the people who want to impose them don't know how to count fish. "The thing about these government guys is they don't go out on the water," Steve tells me. "All their statistics are based on catches. As far as they're concerned, if you don't catch the fish they don't exist." Counting fish is something between an art and a science, combining theory, models, and guesswork. In the United States, the reigning technique of fish counting is virtual-population analysis, in which you take the number of fish caught, try to figure out how old those fish are, compare the catch with the catches of other years, factor in the natural mortality rate and various trend indicators, and infer from the calculations the size of the year class. The greatest obstacle to accurate fish counting is that the size of year classes can change dramatically from year to year for environmental reasons that have nothing to do with fishing and are not very well understood. Destruction of habitat and degradation of spawning grounds certainly play roles as important as overfishing. Most people believe that although virtual-population analysis may not give you the right numbers, it gives you the right trend. But if you don't want to believe any of the statistics there are good reasons not to.

Finally, even if you do manage to set a quota, you have to allocate it among all the different kinds of fishermen, and each group fights hard for all the fish it can get. The current quota for tuna is 1,250 metric tons, divided among harpooners, hand-liners, rod-and-reelers, and purse seiners, and there are arcane formulas to determine how much each group should get. A major complaint of the harpooners and hand-liners is that the five Atlantic purse-seine boats get some 25 percent of the tuna allocation, because of a charter they obtained from the federal government in the 1960s. But the most heated allocation arguments of all are between the people who fish for pleasure and the people who fish for work.

Recreational tuna fishermen are mainly charter-boat captains and the fishing parties who hire them during the summer for a day of sport on the water. The recreational fishermen argue that, whereas there are a lot more of them than commercial tuna fishermen, the commercial fishermen have 82 percent of the bluefin allocation. The commercial fishermen argue that the recreational fishermen are just having fun, whereas they are practicing a trade their fathers and grandfathers pursued. A leading spokesman for the commercial fishermen's interests is Jerry Abrams, who owns the Fresh Water Fish Company, opposite



ıer Four in Boston, and who told me, "An allo-
ation struggle is going on here on the backs of
ıe commercial fishermen, on behalf of a group
elite recreationalists, people who were born
ith a spoon in their mouths, a spoon full of oil,
ho go out on their Bendel Davis boats, with
ıeir Murray fighting chairs, who are more in-
rested in the strike rate off Bimini than in the
sh."

As Abrams sees it, now that the resource is
aluable, the government wants to take it away.
"he government has to say there's a problem in
e fishery, because if there isn't a problem the
overnment doesn't belong there," he says.

I ask, "But what if the government is right?"

"What I am saying is that we who rely on the
source to earn a living are the people who need
be most concerned about conservation, and if
is true that the only way to save it is not to fish
r a few years, then we won't fish. But before we
cept that, we are going to have to accept that
the government's stock assessment is
accurate."

The *Elizabeth Ames* is equipped with a color
nar and a depth finder, and other sophisticat-
l electronics for finding tuna. The tuna carry
small particles of magnetite in their brains that al-
low them to navigate using the earth's magnetic
field. The Weiners use Comsat satellite infrared
photos of sea-surface temperature to figure out
where the tuna might be. Tuna have a system of
lateral lines in their skin that is exquisitely sen-
sitive to changes in water pressure, and they have
binocular vision and excellent hearing. On either
side of the anterior base of the tuna's caudal fin
is a keel that creates turbulence and thus lowers
the drag on the tail fin, a feature we have bor-
rowed in the design of torpedoes, although a
tuna is faster than any torpedo.

The spot Steve has chosen today is two loran
coordinates at which the Weiners have caught fish
before. It is about ten miles offshore, and getting
there takes an hour. Steve, in the tuna tower, re-
duces the speed and begins steering the boat in
big, slow circles. The plane drones far away. A
light breeze soughs through the rigging in the
tuna tower. Shapes appear and disappear in the
brightness. The heat and the light, the monotony
of driving aimlessly around on the ocean, and
the utter emptiness are hypnotic. The *Ames* comes
into a school of porpoises. In twos and threes,
they swim beside the bow. Some do daredevil
runs in front of the boat, and some come soaring



"Oh, they're just bustin' water."

out into the pulpit and picks up the

ing, trying to escape the tuna. Occa-

ll, the massive gleaming bulk of a giant

breaks the water. Just as the boat comes into the boiling water, a cloud crosses the sun, and the fish disappears as though they were a mirage. Ten minutes pass. Then Timmy finds them again. This time, as the boat enters the boil, the sun comes out from behind a cloud, and Brooks says, "Maybe God is on our side."

Timmy is saying, "Three lengths, twelve o'clock. Two lengths, look for color now. Okay, you're right on them." Brooks throws the harpoon. The harpoon enters the water and seems to stick inside it, as if it had struck a submerged block of ice.

in the air. There is a whipsawing screech and a crack: the sound of the electricity going off. Down

"Hit it!" Brooks screams again, and the electricity cracks again and the shape goes down and

Kevin and Steve come down the ratlines at

and walk with it toward the rear of the boat. Brooks is in a frenzy. Rage is boiling out of him. "You fucking whore!" he screams twice down into the water in the direction of the fish. The men heave on the rope, hurrying to get the fish to the

gin to show. A tuna's colors are said to glow more brightly when the fish is excited or afraid. The colors of the water were coalescing into a fish. The finlets are canary yellow, and there are

and delicate yellow mottling in between. The bulk of the fish looms up, mouth gaping, tail pumping, until, finally, the huge dumb head breaks the water, shaking from side to side, its wild, terrified eyes staring at the Weiners.

Brooks lets go of the line, runs into the wheelhouse, and reappears with a chrome pistol. He leans over the side of the boat and shoots the fish three times in the head. Three bright red circles leap from the gleaming skin, and the eyes go dull. Immediately, the colors begin to fade, like coals. The men quickly get the transom open and pull the tuna into the boat. It is about ten feet long and has a pot belly—a monstrously oversized fish. Brooks is already selling. "He's a good six hundred. He's fat. Six fifty. He's a hell of a fish." Kevin stabs the fish in the side, and there is a hiss of air followed by a gush of blood. The blood is the same color as human blood, and it steams. Chris's squeamishness has vanished. "Smell the blood? Smell the blood?" he keeps asking me. Soon blood is everywhere on the deck, and shit and also milt, shed by the fish in a dying desire to reproduce. Kevin works quickly to gut the fish and get it into the brine tank before the heat in its core can begin to cook the flesh. With a handsaw he cuts part of the head off, and then he pushes a long wire down the spinal column of the fish, to destroy the nerves, so that the fish won't jerk involuntarily and break someone's leg. During this operation the fish flops wildly around, then lies still. Kevin saws the rest of the head off, crawls into the body cavity up to his shoulders, and rips out the guts. The boot-shaped stomach is stuffed with whole pogies. The heart is the size of a football. Kevin cuts out the meat behind the eyes—the hero steaks—and puts them aside, they are his prize.

It is much more difficult to catch the last bluefin tuna than it is to poison the last condor or to shoot the last tiger. Our concept of an endangered species, based as it is on the threat of biological extinction, doesn't apply very well to fish like bluefin tuna, which lay millions of eggs a year. With fish, one is talking about commercial extinction—about overfishing the population to the point where it crashes, leaving a permanent remnant population that can be fished only recreationally, in the way that people hunt elk and deer. That will have a ripple effect all the way down the food chain, and if the fish is at the top of the food chain, as the giant bluefin tuna is, the effect could be profound.

Marine conservationists have discovered that the plight of cod, haddock, and flounder is harder to sell to people who care about wildlife than the plight of dolphins and whales. "My thing and the standard rap I give is, fish are wildlife, too," says Carl Safina of the Audubon Society. Safina

a small man in his late thirties whose hair is uch shorter than it was when he was a drummer pic and rock bands. "When you say bluefin una to most people, they think you're talking out dolphin. Why is the tuna/dolphin problm only a dolphin problem? Our humanitariann dissipates the further we get from our phylum."

In 1989, Safina persuaded his superiors at udubon to establish the Living Oceans Proam, that organization's first major entry into arine-fishery management, with himself as dictor. Right away, Safina says, "I began looking r a charismatic fish, a mascot, something peoe could relate to. I thought about using a shark, ecause sharks are top carnivores, like we are, so eople can relate to them, but it would have taka year to put the data together. Also, sharks en't cuddly. The giant bluefin tuna seemed like e best choice, because it is the fastest, strongest, rgest bony fish in the ocean, and if any fish was oing to appear to be warm and fuzzy, à la Char- Tuna, it's the giant bluefin. Also, I have a eep personal acquaintance with this fish. My ther used to take me tuna fishing, and my feelgs about this fish are tied up with that."

The biological superlatives of the living animal, n the one hand, and the amount of money it is orth dead, on the other, have made the giant luefin "the ultimate political fish," in the words Mike Sutton, of the World Wildlife Fund. Vorld Wildlife and Audubon were mainly reponsible for the proposal to list giant bluefin on ppendix 1 at the CITES (Convention on Inrnational Trade in Endangered Species) meetng in Kyoto, Japan, in 1992. (African elephants, ndas, and humpback whales are some of the anals on Appendix 1.) The proposal provoked idespread protest in Japan, where it was viewed an attempt by the West to interfere with panese culture. The possibility of a tuna, the uintessential commercial fish, being declared n endangered species deeply alarmed the fishing ndustry here. The proposal failed, but as a polital maneuver it was a success, because it put giit tuna on the same footing as "the charismatic egafauna of the conservation movement," in Sana's words. Safina hopes the United States will y to list bluefin tuna on Appendix 2 at this ar's CITES meeting, in Florida in November.

Safina's prominent associations with bluefin olitics have made it harder for him to use his oat. Last summer, he told me, a tuna fisherman cognized him in Montauk, where he keeps his at, and began screaming and coming after him, until a few other fishermen restrained the man.

George Coffin, a blond-bearded man wearg tinted glasses, met the Weiners' giant in oothbay. He was driving a delivery truck with a hill of ice cubes in the back. Sprawled on the ice, the giant went to Cundy's Harbor, Maine, where it spent the night in a brine tank. The next morning, it traveled to the headquarters of the Weiners' fish dealer, Robert Fitzpatrick, in Gloucester. Now, late in the afternoon, the giant is submerged in another brine tank, at the back of Wright's Fish Company, next to a shack that is the outpost of Maguro America, Inc., Fitzpatrick's company. Its skin is dark blue and purple, like a bruise, and it gleams in the overhead lights. The flesh where the head had been attached has turned white.

Fitzpatrick offers to sell giants on consignment for his clients: he gets the tuna from the boat to Tokyo, for which he charges a commission; the fisherman takes the risk at the auction and stands to earn most of the profit. "In this business it's not just risk, it's market share," Fitzpatrick says. "You got to be able to handle eight, ten giants at once, and a small dealer like me can't gamble that kind of money." Two or three times during the season, when he feels lucky, Fitzpatrick will buy a giant outright from a fisherman and take a chance at the auction. "Hey," he says, tossing a couple of imaginary dice. "It's all a crapshoot."

The reason dealing giant tuna is a crapshoot is that no one in this country really knows what the Japanese are going to think of any particular fish. On an average day there will be a giant that sells for $30,000 and a giant that sells for $3,000, and to the untutored eye these two fish will look exactly alike. Fitzpatrick has been to Tokyo's Tsukiji Market to study the masters at work, and he routinely carries a *sashibo*, which is a tuna core-sampler, stuffed into his boot. Sometimes he slips into a Japanese accent when he is talking about tuna. But even he is humble before the Japanese mystery of the perfect giant tuna.

> THE BULK OF THE FISH LOOMS UP, MOUTH GAPING, TAIL PUMPING, UNTIL FINALLY THE HUGE HEAD BREAKS THE WATER, ITS WILD, TERRIFIED EYES STARING

"Luster is important," he says, getting up from his desk and going out to the brine tank. "You've got to have a living color in the fish, not a dead color; it has to look as if there were life inside the tissue. Oil, fat, feel, shape, and taste are all a part of it. If you're good, you can taste the way the fish died. If it fought for a long time on a line, the meat will have a burned taste, from lactic-acid buildup in the muscles, which the Japanese call *yake*. Some guys say you can taste how afraid the fish was when it died. If the fisherman used an electric harpoon sometimes you find that the meat is so firm on the first day that you can't get your core-sampler into it. The more juice the fishermen gave the fish, the harder it is. A second day in the tank can help an electric fish a lot." An electric

in convulsions, damaging meat inside the

even the
Japanese always know what's going on with an

Frequently, Fitzpatrick is in the delicate position of having to tell a fisherman that his giant isn't good enough to go to Japan. That means

dollars a pound, instead of ten or twenty. "My fishermen all go, 'How is he?'" Fitzpatrick clasps his hands together and scrunches up his face beseechingly, like a man asking his doctor about his ailing mother. "I go, 'Well, he's a domestic fish. He's big, you did a nice job, but he's domestic.' They go, 'When's he going to Japan?' I go, 'No, you don't understand. He's not going to Japan.' They go, 'Oh, no!'"

Fitzpatrick examines a tail steak cut from the Weiners' giant. "Nice color. Decent fat. The fat dispersal could be better." He points out that the fat is concentrated in pouches under the skin, instead of being spread through the flesh. "Still, good shape." He holds his hands suggestively in front of his belly. "I like his chances." Going to the other end of the floor, Fitzpatrick fetches a pine coffin. He swaddles the bottom of it with a foil-lined space blanket. Then he ties a rope around the tail of the giant and, using a forklift, carefully lifts it out of the brine tank and nestles it into the coffin. He packs ice around its sides, "so he'll be comfy for the ride." He spreads another space blanket over the top of the fish, saying, "The Japs love this high-tech stuff." He picks up the lid of the coffin—"Sayonara, my friend"—and nails it down over the tuna.

Every day, 500 species of marine life—blowfish, live flounder, dried sardines, Chilean salmon, Alaskan pollack, Thai shrimp, sea bream—are brought into Tsukiji Market, auctioned, removed to the vast warren of middlemen's stalls, and resold to restaurants and retail stores around Tokyo. Tsukiji is almost sixty years old, which is old for Tokyo, and it is impossibly cramped, amazingly clean, paved with mismatched cobblestones, roofed with a patchwork of corrugated metal and fiberglass, and open at the sides. The tuna auction takes place at five-thirty in the morning in the back of the market, next to the Sumida River. Here, around midnight, some seventy-two hours after they caught it, the Weiners' giant arrives by truck. Tuna coffins from all over the world are lying around, and piles of sodden space blankets. Employees of the market uncrate the fish and heave it up onto an ancient-looking scale. Its

a slip of paper, and the paper is stuck to the

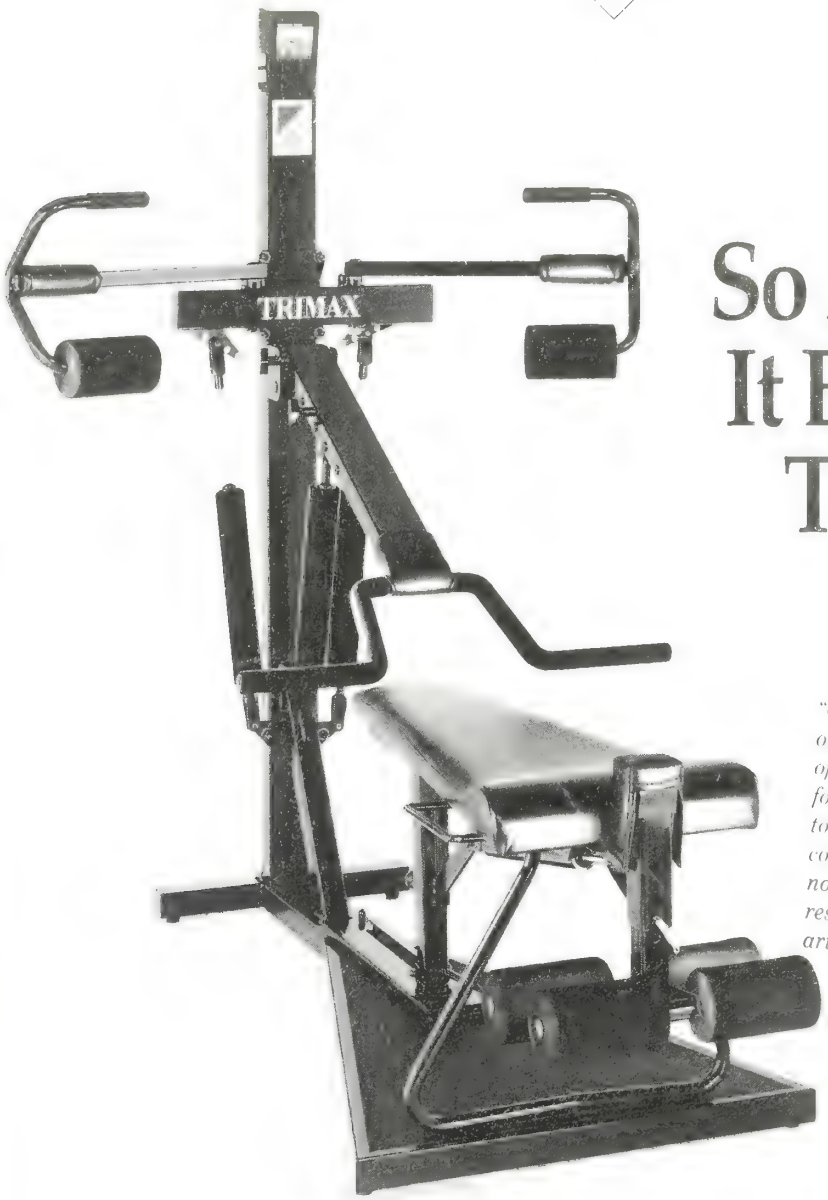
A man with a pot of red paint draws Japanese characters on the side of the fish, identifying it as Boston bluefin, and he draws a red circle around the harpoon scar. The men lift the tuna onto a barrow, wheel it across the floor, and put it on a pallet with other tuna being sold through the Tohto Suisan auction house, which is one of seven auction houses operating in the market.

Giant tuna from Australia, Chile, Spain, and Hawaii are among the tuna's neighbors. The biggest giants are at the front of each group, with tuna in descending order of size fanning out behind. The tuna buyers, neatly dressed in blue uniforms, black boots, and blue caps, and each carrying a flashlight, a pad, a pencil, and a meat hook down in his boot, move between the ranks of tuna. They pick up a tail steak, feel it, shine a flashlight on it, peer into the body cavity, roll a piece of core sample into a marble, throw it down, make a note on a pad, and walk on to the next tuna.

At five-thirty, the tuna auctioneer begins rocking softly on a rickety dais and crying numbers in a strange rhythm. Tuna buyers are crowded onto little bleachers fifteen feet away, facing the auctioneer and making sharp cries and peculiar hand gestures: an outstretched palm means 5,000 yen per kilo; a waggled palm is 5,500, a thumb stuck up is 6,000. The Weiners' fish is not a success. It sells for 4,500 yen a kilo, or $19.39 a pound—about $7,500 total. A month later, the Weiners will get $32,000 for a giant about the same size. The new owners of the tuna wheel it into the maze of stalls where the middlemen work. The tuna passes live eels swimming in buckets, dried squid, abalone, Japanese lobsters, crabs crawling in sawdust. Men are crying hoarsely to one another, and rubber boots squelch on wet pavement.

At the new owner's stall, a worker takes a break from filleting live eels and helps lift the giant onto a chrome-plated operating table. One man begins wiping it down, washing it off, and wiping it down some more. Another man carefully carves out the anus. The head butcher, who is holding an extremely large knife and has various other knives and saws beside him, makes a long slice down the backbone, neatly divides that into six sections—high, middle, and low *toro*, and high, middle, and low *chai*, or back. Another man trims discolored meat from around the sides, continually wiping the meat, buffing it to a low gloss, and arranges the cuts in a large refrigerated display case under bright lights. Other cuts are painstakingly trussed up into handsome one- and two-kilo packages for regular customers. In two hours of hard work, the Weiners' giant has been rendered into burgundy-colored, terrifically appetizing blocks of money, waiting for sushi-bar owners and supermarket buyers and department-store food-counter managers to come and cart away pieces to points all over Tokyo.

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HONORED GUEST

By Joy Williams



S

grade because two of her
suicide the year before and
suicide notes between them
erywhere, and they were full
of misspellings and preten-
tdise show. Then this year
a girl had taken an overdose
of Tylenol, which of course
bottle had been broken into and was
full of Tylenol, just jammed with it.
Fake, yes, motor. Under the circum-
stances, it was amazing that Helen

ed to die at home, which Helen could understand. She understood it perfectly, she'd say, but actually she understood it less well than she had. Or rather it had become clear that her mother's wish wasn't even what needed [illegible]. Nothing needed to be understood.

There was a little brass bell on her mother's bedside table. It was the same [illegible] had been placed at Helen's command when she was a little girl, sick upon occasion with some harmless little kid's sickness. She had just to reach out her hand and ring the bell and her mother would come or even her father. Her mother never used the bell now, she kept it there as sort of a joke, actually. Her

mother was not utterly co
fined to bed. She mov
around a bit at night a
placed herself, or was plac
by others, in other roo
during the day. Sometim
one of the women who h
been hired to care for h
during the day would ev
take her for a drive, out
see the icicles or to the ba
window. Her mother's nam
was Lenore, and sometim
in the night her moth
would call out this nam
her own, Lenore! in a stro
urgent voice, and Helen
her own room would shu
der and cry a little.

This had been going
for a while. In the summ
Lenore had been diagnos
and condemned, but she kept bou
ing back, as the doctors put it, un
recently. The daisies that bloom
in the fall down by the storm-sp
elm had come and gone, as had th
little kids at Halloween. Thanksg
ing had passed without comme
and it would be Christmas soo
Lenore was ignoring it. The boxe
balls and lights were in the cell
buried deep. Helen had made th
horrible mistake one night of aski
her what she wanted for Christm
and Lenore had said, "Are y
stupid!" Then she said, "Oh, I do
mean to be so impatient. It's th
medicine. My voice doesn't ev
sound right. Does my voice sou
right? Get me something you'll wa

er. A piece of jewelry or some-
ing. Do you want the money for
it?" She meant this sin-
cerely.

At the beginning, they had talked
gerly like equals. This was more im
rtant than a wedding, this prepara-
on. They even laughed like girls
gether remembering things. They
membered when Helen was a little
l before the divorce and they were
driving somewhere and Helen's fa-
er had been stopped for speeding
d Lenore had wanted her picture
ken with the state policeman and
elen had taken it. "Wasn't that
an!" Lenore said to Helen.

When Lenore died, Helen would
down to Florida and live with her
her. "I've never had the slightest
sire to visit Florida," Lenore would
y. "You can have it."

At the beginning, death had given
em the opportunity to be interest
g. This was something special. There
is only one crack at this. But then
y lost sight of it somehow. It be-
me a lesser thing, more terrible. Its
eaning crumbled. They began wait-
g for it, terrible, terrible. Lenore had
ends, but they called now, they didn't
me over so much. "Don't come over,"
nore would tell them, "it wears me
t." Little things started to go wrong
th the house. Leaks, lights. The bulb
the kitchen would flutter when the
ter was turned on. Helen grew fat for
ne reason. The dog, their dog, began
change. He grew shy. "Do you think
's acting funny?" Lenore asked Helen.
She did not tell Helen that the dog
d begun to growl at her. It was a se-
t growl, he never did it in front of
yone. He had taken to carrying
ound one of her slippers with him, he
s almost never without it. He cher-
ed her slipper.

"Do you remember when I put Gre-
n Formula on his muzzle because
turned gray so young?" Lenore said.
e was only about a year old and he
gan to turn gray? The things I used
do. The way I spent my time."

But now she did not know what to do
h time at all. It seemed more ex-
tant than ever. One couldn't satis-
t, one could never do enough for it.
She was so uneasy.

Lenore had a dream in which she wasn't dying at all. Someone else had died. People had explained this to her over and over again. And now they were getting tired of correcting her about this, impatient.

She had a dream of eating bread and dying. Two large loaves. Pounds of it, still warm from the oven. She ate it all, she was so hungry, starving! But then she died. It was the bread. It was too hot, was the explanation. There were people in her room, but she was not among them.

When she woke, she could feel the bread in her throat, scalding it. It was hot, gummy, almost liquid. She lay in bed on her side, her dark eyes open. It was four o'clock in the morning. She swung her legs to the floor. The dog growled at her. He slept in her room with her slipper, but he growled as she made her way past him. Sometimes self-pity would rise within her and she would stare at the dog, tears in her eyes, listening to him growl. The more she stared, the more sustained was the soft growl, as though the creature had no need to breathe.

She had a dream about a tattoo. This was a pleasant dream. She was walking away and she had the most beautiful tattoo. It covered her shoulders, her back, the back of her legs. It was unspeakably fine.

Helen had a dream that her mother wanted a tattoo. She wanted to be tattooed all over, a full custom bodysuit, but no one would do it. Helen woke protesting this, grunting and cold. She had kicked off her blankets. She pulled them up and curled tightly beneath them. There was a boy at school who had gotten a tattoo and now they wouldn't let him play basketball.

In the morning, Lenore said, "Would you get a tattoo with me? We could do this together. I don't think it's creepy," she added. "I think you'll be glad later. A pretty one, just small somewhere. What do you think?" The more she considered it, the more it seemed the perfect thing to do. What else could be done? She had given Helen her wedding ring, so what?

Her mother seemed happy. Her gaunt face seemed more familiar to Helen. "I'll get him to come over here, to the house. I'll arrange it," her mother said. Helen couldn't defend herself against this notion. She still felt sleepy, she was always sleepy. There was something wrong with [illegible] but not much.

But Lenore couldn't arrange it. When Helen returned from school, her mother said, "It can't be done. I'm so upset and I've lost interest, but I'll give you the short version. I called [illegible] I must have made twenty calls. At last I got someone to speak to me. His name was Smoking Joe and he was one hundred miles away, but he sounded as though he'd do it. And I asked him if there was any place he didn't tattoo, and he said, 'Faces, dicks, and hands.'"

"Mom!" Helen said. Her face reddened.

"And I asked him if there was anyone he wouldn't tattoo, and he said, 'Drunks and the dying.' So that was that."

"But you didn't have to tell him. You won't have to tell him," Helen said.

"That's true," Lenore said dispiritedly. But then she looked angrily at Helen. "Are you crazy! Sometimes I think you're crazy!"

"Mom!" Helen said, crying. "I want you to do what you want."

"This was my idea, mine!" Lenore said. The dog gave a high nervous bark. "Oh dear," Lenore said. "I'm speaking too loudly." She looked at him as though to say how clever it was [illegible] both of them to realize this.

That night Lenore could not sleep. There were no dreams, nothing. High clouds swept slowly past the window. She got up and went into the living room, to the desk there. She looked with distaste at the desk, at all the objects in this room. There wasn't one thing here she'd want to take with her to the grave, not one. The dog had shuffled out of the bedroom with her and now lay at her feet, a slipper in his mouth, a red one with a little bow. She wanted to make note of a few things, clarify some things. She took out a piece of paper. The furnace turned on, and she heard something moving behind the walls. "Enjoy it while you can," she said to it. She sat at the desk, her back very straight, waiting for something. After a while, she looked at the dog. "Give me that,"

er had. I don't

e! and wring her hands. She want-
d herself. Her mind ran stumbling,

When Helen got up, she would ask her to make some toast. Toast would taste good. Helen would press the GOOD MORNING letters on the bread. It was a gadget, like a cookie cutter. When the bread was toasted, the words

Hed honey into them.

fully, the way she always had. They sat

the toast. Sleet struck the windows.

the golden letters against the almost

Lenore felt peaceful. She even felt a little better. But it was a cruelty to feel a little better. A cruelty to Helen.

"Turn on the radio," Lenore said, "and find out if they're going to can-

day, she would talk to her. Important

would still matter years from now.

Callers on a talk show were speaking about wolves. "There should be wolf control," someone said, "not wolf

"Are you a wolf worshiper?" her

"I believe they have the right to

wrong. She moved the dial on the ra-

"You can't wear mine, that's not the

them. Maybe that's what I'll do today. I'll go through them with Jean. It's Jean who comes today, isn't it?"

"I don't want your clothes!"

"No, why not? Not even the sweaters?"

Helen's mouth trembled.

"Oh, what are we going to do!" Lenore said. She clawed at her cheeks. The dog barked.

"Mom, Mom," Helen said.

"We've got to talk, I want to talk," Lenore said. What would happen to Helen, her little girl . . .

Helen saw the stain her mother had noticed on the blouse. Where had it come from? It had just appeared. She would change if she had time.

"When I die, I'm going to forget you," Lenore began. This was so obvious, this wasn't what she meant. "The dead just forget you. The important things, all the loving things, everything we . . ." She closed her eyes, then opened them with effort. "I want to put on some lipstick today," she said.

"If I don't, when you come home, tell me."

Helen left for school just in time to catch the bus. Some of her classmates stood by the curb, hooded, hunched. It was bitter out.

"Hi," they said.

"All right."

In the house, Lenore looked at the dog. There were only so many dogs in a person's life, and this was the last one in hers. She'd like to kick him. But he had changed when she'd gotten sick, he hadn't been like this before. He was bewildered, he didn't like it—death—either. She felt sorry for him.

he followed her with the slipper.

At nine, the first in a number of nurse's aides and companions arrived. By three, it was growing dark again. Helen returned before four.

"The dog needs a walk," her mother said.

"It's so icy out, Mom, he'll cut the pads of his feet."

"He needs to go out!" her mother screamed. She wore a little lipstick and sat in a chair, wringing her hands.

the dog to the door. He looked out uneasily into the wet cold blackness. They

moved out into it a few yards to a bu
he had killed long before, and he dr
bled a few drops of urine onto it. Th
walked a little farther, across the du
shining yard toward the street. It w
still, windless. The air made a hissi
sound. "Come on," Helen said. "Do
you want to do something?" The d
walked stoically along. Helen's eyes b
gan to water with the cold. Her mot
er had said, "I want Verdi played at t
service, Scriabin, no hymns." Hel
had sent away for some recordin
How else could it be accomplished, t
Verdi, the Scriabin . . . Once she h
called her father and said, "Wh
should we do for Mom?"

"Where have you been!" her mot
er said when they got back. "My Gc
I thought you'd been hit by a truck

They ate supper, macaroni a
cheese, something one of the wom
had prepared. Lenore ate it witho
speaking. She looked at the emp
plate.

"Do you want some more, Mom
Helen asked.

She shook her head. "One of th
girls that comes says she'll take t
dog."

Helen swallowed. "I think it wou
be good," she said.

"That's it, then. She'll take him t
morrow."

"Is she just going to see how it wo
out or what?"

"No, she wants him. She lives in
iffy neighborhood, and the dog, y
know, can be impressive when
wants. I think better now than lat
He's only five, five next month." S
knew the dog's birthda
She laughed at this.

The next day when Helen ca
home from school, the dog was go
His bowls were gone from the corr
near the sink.

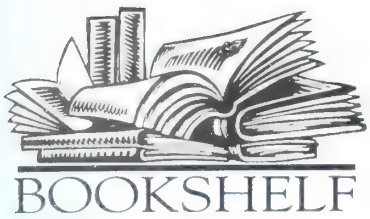
"At least I have my slipper bac
Lenore said. She had it in her ha
the red slipper.

Helen was doing her homewo
She was a funny kid, Lenore thoug
there she was doing her homework

"It's almost over for me," Len
said. "I'm at the end of my life."

Helen looked up. "Mom," she sa
"I can't believe it."

"I'm a nihilist," Helen said. "Tha
what I'm going to be."



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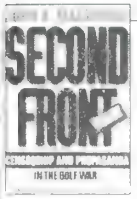
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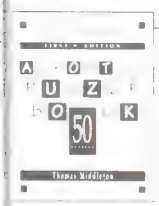
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ing. These friendly customer service reps
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Helen got up and went outside as though hypnotized. Sometimes she behaved like this, as though she were still an unwitting but efficient instrument. She could have thoughts and not think them. She was protected, and at the same time she was helping her mother. To her pels, the cold became this peculiar happiness.

The snow was damp and lovely. Huge flakes softly struck her face and felt like living things. She went past the porch, the lights lit it, pushed her hands deeply in the snow, and made a snowball for her mother, perfect as an orange.

"Oh, you," Lenore said. "Get me another."

"Get two, come on," her mother

"No!" Helen said. "This is . . . you're just pretending . . ."

Lenore looked at her. She pulled her bathrobe around herself. "I'm go me to come to bed," she said.

"Do you want me to make some tea?" Helen said. "Let me make some tea."

"Tea, tea," Lenore mimicked. "Wha will you drink in Florid You'll drink iced tea."

That night, Lenore dreamed she was on a boat with others. A whit boat, clear lovely water. They wer moving quickly, but there was a bang ing sound, arrhythmic, incessant, sad, was sad. It's a banger, they said, the fis too big for the box, that's what we ca them. Let it go, Lenore begged. It late now, they said, too late now for i

"Lenore!" she cried. She went int Helen's room. Helen slept with th light on, her radio playing softly, book scattered on her bed.

"Sleep with me," her mother said

"I can't, please," Helen said. She shrank back.

"My God, you won't lie down wit me!" her mother said. She had thin from Helen's childhood still—litt nightgowns, coloring books, valentine

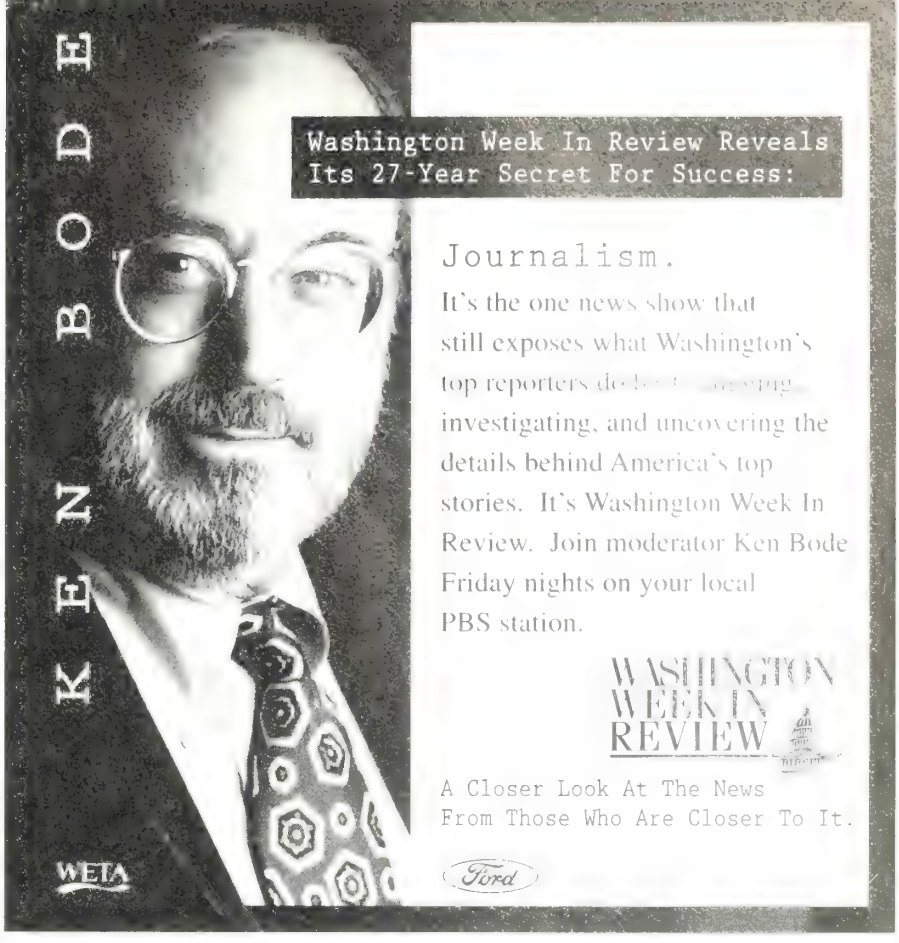
"All right, all right," Helen said. H eyes were wild; she looked blinded

"No, all right, forget it," Leno said. She shook her head from side side, panting. Helen's room was most bare. There were no pictures, r pretty things, not even a mirror. Pla tic was stapled to the window fram to keep out the cold. When had th happened? Lenore thought. Tomo row, she thought. She shouldn't t to say anything at night. Words night were feral things. She limp back to her room. Her feet we swollen, discolored; water oozed fr them. She would hide them. B where would she hide them? She s up in bed, the pillows heaped behi her back, and watched them. Th became remote, indec pherable.

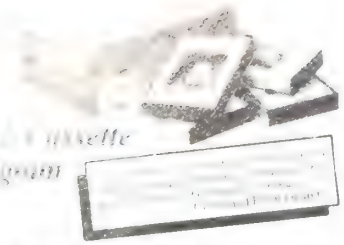
It became morning again. "Motl . . . Earth," said someone on the rad "An egg?" Helen asked. "Do you wa an egg this morning?"

"You should get your hair cut t day," Lenore said. "Go to the beau parlor."

"Oh, Mom, it's all right."
"Get it trimmed or something. It reds something."
"But nobody will be here with you," elen said. "You'll be home by your- lf."
"Go after school. I can take care of yself for an hour. Something ouldn't happen in an hour like that, you think?" I more felt sly saying is. Then she said, "I want you to ok pretty, feel good about yourself."
"I really hate those places," Helen id.
"Can't you do anything for me!" more said.
Helen got off the bus at a shopping all on the way back from school. "I n't have a reservation," she told the oman at the desk.
"You mean an appointment," the oman said. "You don't have an ap- ointment."
She was taken immediately to a air in front of a long mirror. The omen in the chairs beside her were looking in the mirror while their ursdresser stared into it too, and cut eir hair. Everyone was chatting and axed, but Helen didn't know how to this, even this, this simple thing.
Sometimes Helen dreamed that she as her own daughter. She was free, lf-absorbed, unfamiliar. Helen took very little of her thoughts.
She looked at the woman beside r, who had long wet hair and was oking a cigarette. Above her shoe as a black parole anklet.
"These things don't work at all," e woman said. "I could take the mn thing off, but I think it's kind of lish. Often I do take the damn thing , and it's in one place and I'm in other. *Quite* another."
"What did you do?" Helen asked.
"I didn't do anything," the woman wled. Then she laughed. She pped her cigarette in the cup of ffee she was holding.
The washing, the cutting, the dry- g, all this took a long time. Her hair- sser was an Asian woman named ickey. "How old do you think I am?" ickey asked.
"Twenty," Helen said. She did not ok at her, or herself, in the mirror. e kept her eyes slightly unfocused, e way a dog would.
"I am thirty-five," Mickey said, de-





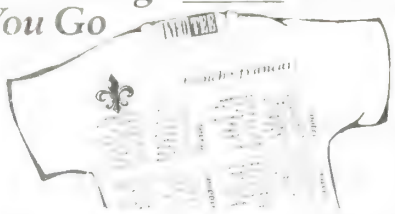


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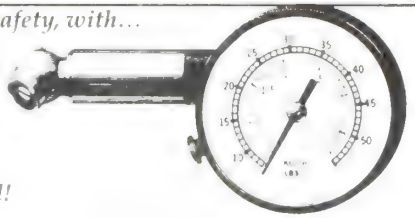
"I wonder," said Noah,
"Did we bring in the Protozoa?"
"Don't worry," said his daughter,
"We've some in the drinking water."
—WILLIAM D. BARNEY

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lighted. "I am one-sixteenth Ain
Do you know anything about t
Ainu'"

Helen knew it wasn't necessary
reply to this. Someone several cha
away said with disbelief, "She's nami
the baby *what?*"

"The Ainu are an aboriginal people
north Japan. Up until a little while a
they used to kill a bear in a sacred rit
al each year. The anthropologists we
wild about this ritual and were dis
pointed when they quit, but here go
I will share it with you. At the end
each winter, they'd catch a bear cub a
give it to a woman to nurse. Wow, son
thing! After it was weaned, it was giv
wonderful food and petted and play
with. It was caged, but in all respect
was treated as an honored guest. But t
day always came when the leader of t
village would come and tell the bear s
rowfully that it must die, though th
loved it dearly. This was a long oratio
this part. Then everyone dragged t
bear from its cage with ropes, tied it
a stake, shot it with blunt arrows th
merely tortured it, then scissored its ne
between two poles where it slowly str
gled, after which they skinned it,
capitated it, and offered the severed he
some of its own flesh. What do y
think? Do you think they knew wh
they were doing?"

"Was there something more t
than that?" Helen said. "Did son
thing come after that?" She really w
a serious girl. Her head burned from t
hair dryer that Mickey was wieldi
dramatically.

"These are my people!" Mickey sa
ignoring her. "You've come a long w
baby! Maine or bust!" She sounc
bitter. She turned off the dryer,
moved Helen's smock, and with a
tle brush whisked Helen's should
"Ask for Mickey another time," Mi
ey said. "That's me. Happy holiday

Helen paid and walked out into
cold. The cold felt delicious on h
head. "An honored guest," she s
aloud. To live was like being an ho
ored guest. The thought was outs
her, large and calm. Then you were
longer an honored guest. The thou
turned away from her
faded.

Her mother was watching te
vision with the sound off when H

got home. "That's a nice haircut,"
mother said. "Now don't touch it,
n't pull at it like that, for God's sake.
pretty, you're pretty."

t was a ghastly haircut really. Hel-
s large ears seemed to float, no
ger quite attached to her head
nore gazed quietly at the haircut.

Mom," Helen said, "do you know
re's a patron saint of television?"

enore thought this was hysterical.

It's true," Helen said. "St. Clare."

enore wondered how long it would
e for Helen's hair to grow back.

ater they were eating ice cream.
ey were both in their nightgowns.
len was reading a Russian novel.
loved Russian novels. Everyone
so emotional, so tormented. They
ched their heads, they fainted, they
boned, they galloped around. The
ow. The hoarfrost. What was hoar-
t, anyway? Russian snow had made
me snow pansy to Helen, mean-
less.

This ice cream tastes bad," her
ther said. "It tastes like bleach or
nething." Some foul odor crept up
throat. Helen continued to read.

hat were they doing eating ice cream
the middle of winter, anyway?
nore wondered. It was laziness.
nething was creeping quietly all
ough her. She'd like to jump out of
skin, she would.

You know," she said, "I believe that
esus walked into this house this
hute, you wouldn't even raise your
it's."

Helen bit her lip and reluctantly
down the book. "Oh, Mom," she
l.

And maybe you'd be right. I bet
lack charisma. I'd bet my last dol-
on it. The only reason he was
rismatic before was that those peo-
lived in a pre-rational time."

Jesus isn't going to walk in here,
m, come on," Helen said.

Well, something is, something big.
u'd better be ready for it." She was
ry. "You've got the harder road,"
said finally. "You've got to behave
way you won't be afraid to re-
mber. But you know what my road
dy road is the nice road."

ike everyone, Lenore had a dread
eing alone in the world, forgotten
God, overlooked. There were bil-
s upon billions of people, after all

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In *New York Revisited*, first published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1906, Henry James observes turn-of-the-century New York in vivid detail. Although written in 1904-1905, when he returned to the United States after living abroad for more than twenty years, the essay is as pertinent today as it was 90 years ago. In this volume, the text appears as it did when originally published, and is enhanced with period illustrations and photographs and an introductory essay by Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*.

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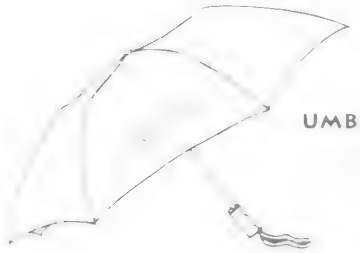
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UMBRELLA.

CARRY-ALL.



ght down to the bottom of it."
"Which one?" Helen asked.
"Which one what?"
"Which philosopher?"
"I can't recall," Lenore said. Sometimes Helen amused her, she really amused her.

Lenore didn't dream that night. e lay in bed panting. She wasn't idy, but there was nothing left to done. The day before, the girl had shed and dried the bed sheets, and fore she put them on again she had ned them. Ironed them! They were t divine, still divine. It was the girl io loved to iron, she'd iron anyfng. Whatsername. Lenore got up d moved through the rooms of the use uncertainly. She could hardly ep her balance. Then she went wn into the cellar. Her heart was unding, it felt wet and small in her est. She looked at the oil gauge on e furnace. It was a little over onearter full. She wasn't going to order y more, she'd see what happened. e barely had the strength to get ck upstairs. She turned on the little np that was on the breakfast table d sat in her chair there, waiting for elen. She saw dog hairs on the floor, gathering together, drifting across the floor.

Helen felt sick, but she would ag herself to school. Her throat was re. She heated up honey in a pan d sipped it with a spoon.
"I'm going to just stay put today," nore said.
"That's good, Mom, just take it easy. u've been doing too much." Helen's rehead shone with sweat. She butned up her sweater with trembling gers.
"Do you have a cold?" her mother d. "Where did you get a cold? Stay me. The nurse who's coming this ernoon, she can take a look at you, ite a prescription. Look at you, you're eating. You've probably got a fever."
"I have a test today, Mom," Helen d.
"A test," Lenore marveled. She ghed. "Take them now, but don't e them later. They won't do you y good later."
Helen wiped at her face with a dishvel.

Looks like this.

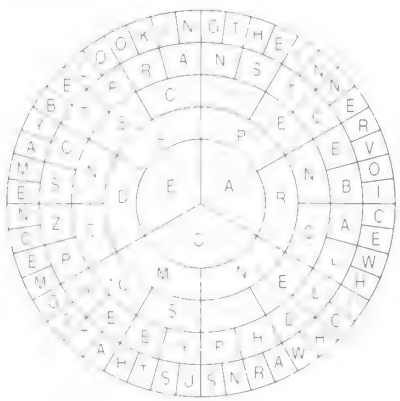


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SOLUTION TO MAY DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 135) [illegible]. The [illegible] spuds [illegible] be formed at the [illegible]. Their [illegible] I don't know why, but I suppose it is to impress them with a sense of discipline and perhaps to avoid any trouble which might arise from an old-timer's refusal to fire at a comrade [illegible]. Orders are orders. *(Editor's Note: This solution erroneously appeared in last month's issue in place of the solution to the April Acrostic. Therefore, we are unable to give free subscriptions for correct solutions to the May Acrostic. We regret the error.)* SOLUTION TO APRIL DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 136): (LEO) ROSTEN: PASSIONS AND PREJUDICES. The most practical things in the world are [illegible] not complicated, but crude, the most practical things are ideas. [illegible] "just the right amount of [illegible]."

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 138, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by June 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive one-year subscriptions to *Harper's Magazine*. The solution will be printed in the July issue. Winners of Double Acrostic No. 136 are Theresa Oszurko, Buffalo, New York; John Wagner, Ann Arbor, Michigan; and Charles E. Sparrell, Scituate, Maine.

Peace in the Middle East (2)

Is the peace with Egypt an encouraging example for Israel?

exchange for peace that they consider to be "occupied" by Israel be restored to the so-called "West Bank", Gaza, and the Golan Heights.

What are the facts?

Peace as little as possible. The agreement to make

received all of this, plus generous grants from the United States ($40 billion to

Egypt gave in return was a piece of paper. And even that was hedged. It

Egypt to join in an "Arab War" against Israel. The peace between Israel and Egypt, which the Israelis had envisioned

and France, turned out, unfortunately, to be the "coldest peace" possible. It is, less of a peace than a de facto state of non belligerence. The Israeli ambassador in Cairo is isolated and blacklisted and does not participate in any official functions of the Egyptian government. There is practically no trade between the two countries and no cultural exchange. The public sector of Egypt, which constitutes 80% of the total economy is forbidden to do business with Israel. Private enterprises are actively discouraged and

tenders for local projects. For "security reasons" Israeli firms are not allowed to participate in trade fairs. Although quite a few Israelis visit Egypt, hardly any Egyptians go to Israel since those who do wish to visit are summoned to the security police for lengthy interrogation.

Not forthcoming on diplomatic front. [illegible] in Egypt or on the Egyptian border. The Egyptian media, including the official and semi official press, are full of anti-Israel and anti Jewish venom, preaching hatred

> "Israel's present government must be commended for proceeding with the greatest caution in the current peace negotiations."

There have been numerous instance of "crazed" Egyptian soldiers

Israeli buses traveling along the border highways, to the general applause of the state-controlled media. On the diplomatic front, the Egyptians aren't any more forthcoming. Egypt spearheaded the campaign to keeping the "Zionism is racism" resolution in the U.N., contrary to U.S. wishes. Egypt exerts much effort to prevent African countries from establishing or renewing diplomatic relations with Israel. Egyptian diplomats, including Butros Butros Ghali, now secretary general of the United Nations, lobbied fervently against the loan guarantees that Israel needed to absorb and to settle the

refugees who have already arrived or will still arrive form the former Soviet Union.

The saving grace for Israel in its very cold peace with Egypt is that the Sinai is very large, and serves as a buffer zone. But in the Golan Heights, which the Syrians wish to have returned in exchange for "peace", and the "West Bank" and Gaza, which the Palestinians whish to have given to them as a "reward" for stopping the "intifada", there is no room at all for buffer zones. Although autonomy for the native Arab population is definitely an Israeli policy goal and a commitment under the Camp David Accords, the "West Bank" and Gaza and the Golan cannot possibly be surrendered to another sovereignty for any foreseeable future. It would make Israel totally indefensible. If the peace with Egypt is an example of what peace with Syria or with the Palestinians would look like, Israel's present government must be commended for proceeding with the greatest caution in the current negotiations and not to entrust its survival to empty promises. Only when the Arabs truly accept Israel as

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"My God, a dishtowel!" Lenore sa
"What's wrong with you? My Go
what's to become of you!"

Startled Helen dropped the tow
She expected to see her face on it
most. That was what had alarmed h
mother so, Helen had wiped off h
own face. Anyone knew better than
do that. She felt faint. She was thin
ing of the test, taking the test in a fe
hours. She took a fresh dishtowel fr
a drawer and put it on the rack.

Everyone at school knew Helen
mother was dying at home. Some
them thought it was cool. Othe
thought if she wasn't getting out cle
though, what was the point.

"What if I die today?" Lenore sa
suddenly. "I want you to be with m
My God, I don't want to be alone!"

"All this week there are tests," He
en said.

"Why don't I wait, then," Lenc
said.

Tears ran down Helen's cheeks. S
stood there stubbornly, looking at h
mother.

"You were always able to turn th
on and off," Lenore said, "just like
faucet. Crocodile tears." But with
moan she clutched her. Then she pull
away. "We have to wash these thing
she said. "We can't just leave them
the sink." She seized the smudged gl
she'd used to swallow her pills from a
rinsed it in running water. She held
up to the window, and it slipped fr
her fingers and smashed against the s
It was dirty and whole, she though
and now it is clean and broken. Th
seemed to her profound.

"Don't touch it!" she screame
"Leave it for Barbara—is that h
name, Barbara?" Strangers, they we
all strangers. "She never knows wh
to do when she comes."

"I have to go, Mom," Helen said

"You do, of course you do," h
mother said. She patted Helen's chee
clumsily. "You're so hot, you're sick

"I love you," Helen said.

"I love you, too," Lenore said. Th
she watched her, walking down t
street, toward the corner. It was gro
ing lighter behind her. The mornin
kept coming. She didn
like it.

On the bus, the driver said to H
en, "I lost my mother when I was ye

You've got to come in there."
Helen walked to the rear of the bus
sat down. She shut her eyes. A girl
and her mother. Her cream-and-red.
'hang in there.' What an idiot."
The bus pounded down the snow
icked streets.
The girl with the gum had been the
e who told Helen how ashes came
ck. Her uncle had died, and his
nes had come in a red shellacked
x. It looked cheap, but it had cost
5 and there was an envelope taped
the box with his name typed on it
neath a classmate window, as though
were being addressed to himself.
s girl considered herself to be some-
at of an authority on the way these
ngs were handled, for she had also
a couple of cosponents and knew
w things were done as far south as
ston. ■

ne Index Sources

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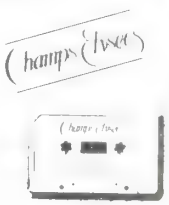
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In Manchuria's boom, echoes of a Japanese utopia

By Ian Buruma



S

Dalian's railroad station, a yellow-brick Deco at-

Tokyo, I tried to imag-

felt like for a Japanese to

a grand continental ad-

venture. This Manchuri-

an port city near Port Arthur, due east

of Beijing, was the point of entry for

their way to a Japanese colony—the

foreign tourists are Japanese, many of them elderly men and women on nostalgia tours. The Chinese welcome Japanese investment. At the same time, "patriotic education" keeps the memory of Japanese wartime atrocities alive in China. I wanted to find out how the Japanese felt about operating here. Were they inspired by the grandeur of their former colony? Or were they hampered by a

L

is a huge construction site: everything old must go; everything new must be big and high and above all "modern,"

the crude vitality of Japan thirty

culture as well as that of Hong Kong,

where customers

through mirrored

companied by music

videotapes of Japanese

bathing beauties. A

there are massage,

"health," parlors offering

"romantic rooms," with

such Hong Kong–style

names as Celebcity and

Beautiful Pearl Club. Just

enough of the old Japanese city remains to give

a glimpse of what was

modern sixty years ago.

Fast money, bright lights,

and political oppression:

the same combination

that marked the Japanese

empire.

I met a typical product of the old

empire on my first day in Dalian; Mr.

Jin, a white-haired man with hazel-

nut-colored eyes, was born in Korea

but moved to Dairen in the 1930s

when his father was offered a job

there. Jin entered a Japanese elemen-

tary school. This was a privilege

enjoyed by all subjects of the Japanese

empire, which naturally included Ko-

reans. Because Japanese subjects had

to have Japanese names, Kim was

changed to Hayakawa. (Jin is the

Chinese pronunciation of Kim.) Feeling

ing more Japanese than anything else,

Kim/ Hayakawa/Jin had wanted to go

to Japan in 1945, but his way was

blocked by the Chinese Nationalist

Navy. He was tormented for his Japanese past during the Cultural Revolution. But he survived, and made a

living by teaching Japanese at a teach-

s college. He speaks Japanese and
rean to his Korean wife, and Chi-
e, with a Japanese accent, to his
ldren. He says he still thinks in
anese.

The irony of Mr. Jin's situation is
t he, being Korean, is not eligible
repatriation to Japan, unlike the
000 Japanese who have returned
n northeastern China since 1972
their haste to escape from the So-
t Red Army in 1945, the Japanese
behind about 20,000 people, most-
women and children. The return
hese people, and their descendants,
ny of whom cannot speak a word of
anese, is televised in Japan as a
tinuing national soap opera; far
re tears have been shed over the re-
nees than over the suffering in-
ted on the Chinese and the
reans in the past. But tears shed in
nt of the TV are cheap. At a re-
tion center for returnees in Tokyo,
ked an old man how the returnees
re treated in Japan. "The Japanese,"
said, "have a bad habit of looking
wn on other Asians. So there is
he discrimination against the re-
nees. You see, they are often re-
ded as Chinese."

Walking through the city, Jin point-
out the various Japanese buildings:
former Bank of Manchuria here,
Yokohama Specie Bank there. We
sed through a busy street where
ssian fur traders once had their
ps. I asked him about the old Chi-
e city. "Mostly pulled down," he
d. There is not much of a Russian
tion left either, apart from some
apidated fin-de-siècle villas on the
er side of the railway line. It seemed
nic that only the Japanese build-
s had survived. "That's one way of
king at it," Jin said. "But you could
o say we should be grateful for what
y left behind."

Colonial architecture, in India as
l as in Manchuria, often looks
fed up. Colonial buildings have to
w who is boss. Most of Dalian's
Japanese buildings, from the for-
r Yamato Hotel to the grandiose
dquarters of the South Manchuri-
Railway Company, are too large,
heavy, too filled with self-impor-
ce to be aesthetically pleasing.
ny are aggressively modernist: the
ist offshoot of Bauhaus architec-
ture. Others are ornate: Baroque, Neo-classical, Renaissance. These buildings had something to prove: that Japan could outdo the West. And by and large, they made their point. The British travel writer Peter Fleming passed through Dairen in 1933. He described the place in *One's Company* as "a sort of Japanese Hong Kong, very orderly and hygienic and up to date." Contemporary Chinese echoes of this eagerness to impress can be found in the slogans plastered all over the city. "Build up Dalian into a beautiful, modernized cosmopolitan city!" and "Make Dalian into the Hong Kong of the north!"

Not far from the city is an area called the Special Economic Zone, a huge tract of land carved out of the rocky coast, filled mostly with Japanese factories, making refrigerators, electronic goods, VCRs, and other products for export. It has been set up as a joint venture of Japanese corporations and the city of Dalian, but most of it is financed by the Japanese. Matsushita has a plant there, as does Toshiba. The plan is to expand the zone into a city of 2 million people by 2010. There is already a hospital and a Japanese school, and the golf course will be completed by next year. About a thousand Japanese work there now. Boosters on the spot describe the zone as a kind of technocratic Utopia, where different peoples work together in perfect harmony.

There is an echo here of Japanese propaganda about Manchukuo, circa 1935. One of the colony's ostensible projects was to unite its "five races"—Japanese, Chinese, Manchus, Koreans, and Mongolians—in a perfect multicultural society. The blending of the five races, represented by the five colors on the Manchukuo flag, was supposed to be an example to the world of Asian racial harmony, built on a Japanese model. No doubt there were Japanese idealists at the time who believed this. But a look at wage differentials alone belies this sweet message: if a Japanese mineworker received 100, a Chinese was entitled to 29; and a Korean, 39.

I asked Mr. Sakai, an administrator in the Special Economic Zone, whether many Chinese were promoted to top positions in Japanese companies. Some, he said, were middle ranking section chiefs. He explained that it was not always possible

THE DREAM, SAID MR. MASAAKI, WAS TO CREATE AN IDEAL, HARMONIOUS SOCIETY WITH BIG WESTERN-STYLE BUILDINGS, A SOCIETY AS PROGRESSIVE AND WEALTHY AS ANY IN EUROPE

to use Japanese company methods in China. Chinese workers, especially those who come from state-owned industries, lack discipline. But the larger corporations, such as Matsushita, try to be as Japanese as they can.

Inside the administration building, I watched a P.R. film meant to attract Japanese investors. Dalian, said the narrator, was pro-Japanese because of its shared history. And the people had the right "Japanese-style" spirit: they were loyal and hardworking. Japanese employees in the Special Economic Zone were interviewed, sitting outside their attractive new homes. "We love it here," they said. A Japanese housewife smiled and said, "Dalian is just like home."

I had been told in Tokyo that the initiative to invest in Dalian in the mid-1980s had come from men with fond memories of the old place. They wanted to "do something" for Dalian. There is a large literature of colonial nostalgia in Japan: picture books, memoirs, and, most recently, a glossy magazine for young readers, with photographs of old Japanese buildings and pretty Chinese girls.

Because it was a commercial town run by the railway company, Dalian was spared the worst military brutalities. (Having been part of a territory leased by Japan since 1905, Dalian was not part of Manchukuo.) The Jap-



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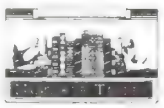
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anese, as Mr. Jin put it, provided fo jobs, and order. "Even if you were sk people here about Japanese pression, they wouldn't tell you an thing much," he said. The prevaili opinion was that anti-Japanese fe ing grew the farther no you went.

It takes about six hours by expr train to get to Shenyang, the larg city in the northeast. Shenyang, Mukden, as it was called when t Japanese were here, was the indust al powerhouse of Manchukuo. Af the revolution, it was the showc of heavy industry and Commun worker heroes.

The maze of factories and wo shops behind Shenyang station ca not have changed much since t 1930s, when Manchukuo was a ma producer of iron ore, steel, mach tools, and automobiles: steam-driv machines pound away as trains loaded in the sidings. The sky i sickly shade of orange. Breathing t polluted air is like sucking on a pi of coal. The silent stream of work the banging and crashing machin the piercing whistles of steam trai the belching chimneys: it is a fan sy of the machine age, a futurist dre that first inspired Japanese coloni ists and was then adopted by the C nese Communists. Japanese advis are now telling the Chinese to t the antiquated factories down a start from scratch, but the Chin are more inclined to repair the which the Japanese consul genera Shenyang, Mr. Yamato Shig likened to sewing patches on an pair of pants.

Mr. Yamato is the kind of learn eccentric one often finds in backw ter consulates. Acid comments on present state of China were follov by a soundless conspiratorial lau He gave me a cultural lesson in the tional sensitivities of the region t made Balkan politics seem straig forward.

The Japanese, Yamato said, w wary of joint ventures with mainla Chinese companies. The law wa slippery concept here, and corrupt was widespread. The overseas C nese from Hong Kong and Southe Asia were better at handling that

ching. They knew whose palms had
e greased, and were in a better
ition to do so. The Japanese liked
form partnerships with the Tai-
nese, however, "for the Taiwanese
they can trust us, because of our
red history. After all, Taiwan was
e treated as part of Japan." The
eans, on the other hand, were im-
sible. Too much bitterness. They
't get along with the Japanese. But
y don't get on with the Chinese er-
r. For whereas the Japanese are
careful not to stir up local sensi-
ties by behaving arrogantly, the
uth Koreans are like the prewar
anese: blunt and impatient. Be-
se there is a large Korean minor-
in northeast China, the South
eans have built a number of fac-
ies there, but their rough treat-
nt of Chinese workers is causing
stant strikes. The Chinese don't
e kindly to Korean bullying, since
ea is still considered a kind of vas-
state of the Middle Kingdom. And
the consul general concluded, the
nese really welcome the Japanese,
cause of "our superior manage-
nt."

A colleague of Mr. Yamato's, Mr.
ayasu Masaaki, spoke about his
dhood in Manchukuo. One should
derstand, he said, that the Japanese
Manchuria had a dream. The dream
o create an ideal, harmonious so-
y with big, Western-style build
s, a society as progressive and
althy as any in Europe. Japanese
nners in Manchukuo had the
nce to build their idea of Utopia.
s simply would not have been pos-
e in Japan, for there would have
n all kinds of civilian resistance.
Manchukuo was "like a blank
et on which we could draw any
ure we wanted."

And the Japanese did plan, and
ild, and create wealth, some of
ch trickled down to the local pop-
tion. Health care improved, schools
e established, a film industry set
The creation of Japan's continen
Utopia came at a frightful cost,
wever, for there was no question of
ividual rights, especially for the lo
people. A kind of order was im-
sed, not through the rule of law but
military force, sugarcoated with
al propaganda. More than 300,000

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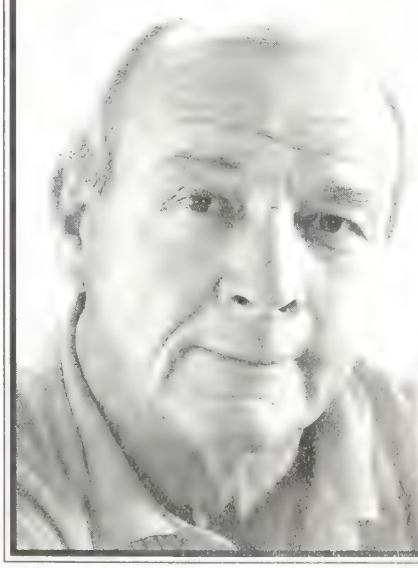
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Chinese were killed in Japanese campaigns to control rebels and bandits [illegible] about 17,000 bodies were found in one mass grave alone. Chinese work- [illegible] monopoly on the opium trade, ostensibly intended to control its use, in fact vastly increased the number of [illegible] in the Kwantung Army felt free to [illegible] entire villages were wiped out through experiments with plague-infested rats, [illegible] drink.

Japanese diplomats and business- [illegible] matters. "Of course many bad things [illegible] Japanese today are not the same people [illegible] ple of that generation could not brook any dissent from their inferiors. Dis- [illegible] be crushed mercilessly. Even as children, we used to get beaten by our fathers if we talked back."

[illegible] railways, the factories, the best buildings—was built by the Japanese. The [illegible] had been very ruthless and very industrious. So, I said to my hosts, Japanese colonization had not been entirely a bad thing. "No," said the chief consul. "That's what we think, too, but we cannot say so openly."

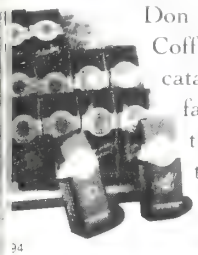
What gave Manchukuo such a false air was the Japanese habit of going overboard in their propaganda. They tried their best to convince the world that Manchukuo was an efficiently [illegible] uniquely benevolent, absolutely har- [illegible] short, a technocratic Utopia, a mod- [illegible] Xinjing (literally New Capital), now [illegible] to its original name of Changchun. It is the kind of city Albert Speer might have built, the [illegible] chitectural dream of bureaucrats [illegible] soldiers, or indeed Communist P[illegible] planners: rationalism gone mad. [illegible] city was designed with a ruler: stra[illegible] avenues culminate in perfectly ro[illegible] circuses, with pompous adminis[illegible] tive and corporate palaces all al[illegible] the way. The monotony of granite [illegible] brick Bauhaus blocks is relieved [illegible] by details of japonaiserie. The h[illegible] square headquarters of the Kwant[illegible] Army is topped by the roof of a [illegible] anese castle. It is now the regio[illegible] head office of the Communist Pa[illegible] once the office of the Japanese mili[illegible] police, or Kempeitai.

Not the least of Japanese deceit[illegible] Manchukuo was the idea that mos[illegible] its inhabitants were not Chinese [illegible] Manchus. In fact, there were [illegible] Manchus left in the 1930s. But [illegible] last Manchu emperor, Henry Puy[illegible] installed on the throne of M[illegible] chukuo after elaborate Shinto c[illegible] monies, which bonded him to [illegible] Japanese Sun Goddess, from wh[illegible] loins the Japanese imperial dyn[illegible] sprang—can still be seen, as a [illegible] puppet, in his former palace, sit[illegible] next to the effigy of his official m[illegible] er, Colonel Yoshioka. There he [illegible] the symbol of *wangdao*, or the K[illegible] ly Way, in the threadbare spler[illegible] of his rather poky study. His eleg[illegible] accumulated grime.

The last emperor's former pal[illegible] originally the head office of the [illegible] revenue administration, is a me[illegible] choly place. Chinese now refer to i[illegible] ficially as the "false" imperial pal[illegible] to make absolutely sure that no [illegible] mistakes the former puppet state [illegible] something real. But the city of Cha[illegible] chun looks real enough now, eve[illegible] the icy stillness of February, when [illegible] and pushcarts slowly and alm[illegible] soundlessly skate along the fr[illegible] streets. I noted little resentmen[illegible] the way young taxi drivers poi[illegible] out the huge buildings the Japa[illegible] had left behind. There was even a[illegible] say, I believe that was once a Japa[illegible] law court, but it is a fine unive[illegible] now. Some of the more pomp[illegible] Japanese buildings had neon sign[illegible] their roots, advertising Japanese V[illegible]

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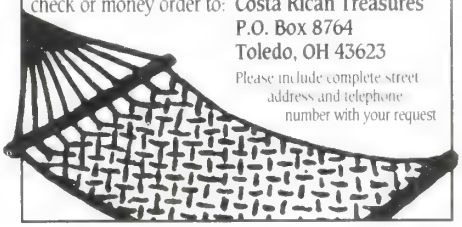
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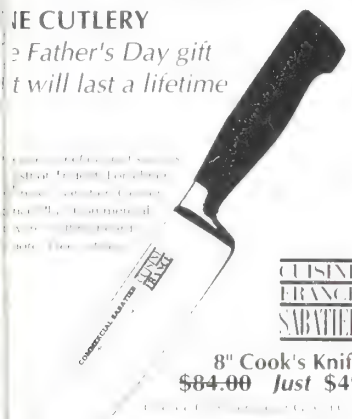
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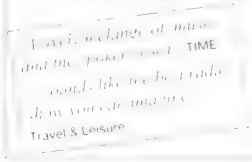


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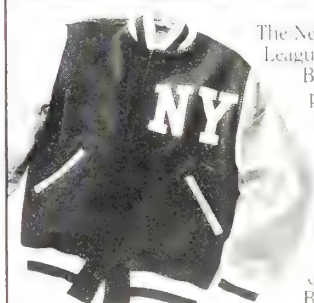
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The problem for the Chinese g ernment is how to control the e nomic force it has unleashed, wh is the same problem the planners a bureaucrats of Manchukuo faced the 1930s. The Japanese tried to c trol every aspect of the count economy. The blueprint for M chukuo's "forced industrializatio announced in 1932, stated "In v of the evils of an uncontrolled ca talist economy, we will use whate state power is necessary to con that economy." The Chinese Co munist Party is not known for its thusiasm for Adam Smith either. did it show any more interest in man rights than the Kwantung Ar And the Chinese government, sees economic development in te of national strength. But since attempt to create an autarchy failed, the current strategy to achi strength is to invite foreign trade investment, and, to some extent, vatize the economy. Less rather t more control is the present aim. Communist Party appears to have treated; or, rather, the party bo are being paid their cut, in traditio Chinese fashion. You see them g ing around the cities in their Cadillac limousines.

I asked Mr. Wang Gang, of the F eign Affairs Office of the Peop Government of Jilin Province, h he saw the current situation. Wan plump, enthusiastic young man dre in a blue suit, liked to use words "macroeconomic framework." He studied at the University of Saskat win. He saw the new econo changes as part of the inevitable co of history. When I asked him wha thought of the Japanese, he gave the usual Chinese answer; it soun like a ritual incantation: "We know about the past, how Japanese imp alists invaded our country and tr ed our people arrogantly and brut We know. It is part of our patri education." But does this still ma today? No, he said, "that's history. inevitable that we need foreign c tal and cooperation to catch up. have fallen behind other countr so we must make sacrifices."

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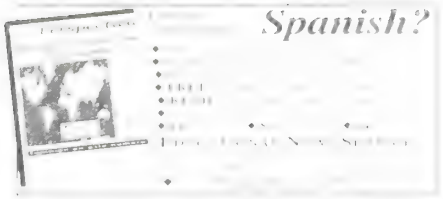
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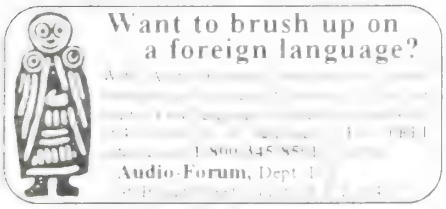
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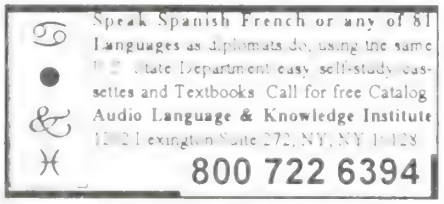
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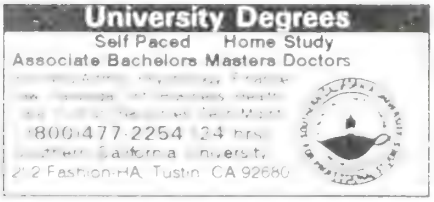
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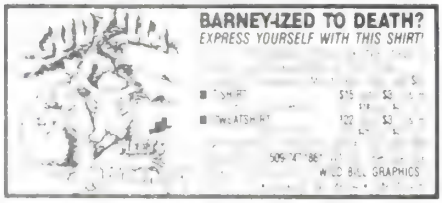
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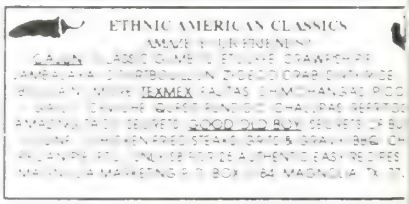
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look like Japan."

I had been warned about the cold in Harbin. My Japanese father-in-law had marched through the area in the Army. He likes to tell the story of how your piss would freeze in the open air like a stalactite.

Harbin is indeed very cold. Gobs of spit, expectorated by the hacking, coughing crowds, are frozen into the sidewalks. I saw beggars, sitting on their knees, with icicles drooping from their beards. But Harbin has great elegance as well. On the corner outside my hotel—the Hotel Moderne, built in the 1910s—was a shop displaying exotic tropical flowers, all made of silk. "Make Harbin a modernized, international city," said the slogan festooned outside the main station.

About ten miles outside Harbin, in some of the bleakest country one

Antung. Unit

were blown up by the Japanese in old boiler room stick up in the air like the bones of a prehistoric mon-

chamber can be visited, as well as the

On the first floor of Ishii's headquarters is a modest museum, which straps and various medical instruments to extract parts of the human anatomy; and there are syringes, and shards of ceramic bombs built to conta tal viruses to be dropped on e areas.

Harbin was the first place I h the old expression "Japanese de police headquarters. After ha been misdirected several tim found an elderly man who look though he might know. He scr his throat, spat on the gro ground the heels of his boot and told me exactly where the p headquarters of the Japanese had been. It was a large, white roque building, a former opera h perhaps. Now it was the Mar Memorial Hall, dedicated to the tyrs of the Japanese occupation. basement floor had been arra as a large exhibition about Japa police terror; an entire torture c ber had been reconstructed, w could be seen through a curta black gauze. There was a to rack, and chains and whips, branding irons of various kind shapes. These were placed on a in front of a stove. When I pr a switch, an orange light lit u stove and a fan inside blew up s of red cotton that played about little flames.

The rooms on the first floor dedicated to the Communist m whose portraits hung on the w Various documents attested t bravery of these young men and w en, who had fought as partisans the Communist Eighth Route A The message was that the Com nist future, and indeed its preser gitimacy, was built upon the co of these martyrs. These were the Catherines and Saint Sebastia Chinese Communism. The Jap imperialists were cast in the ro the Romans, the spiritual ene overcome through the martyrs fering. And now the old enemies being invited back to help Chin come "modern" and "internatio Like the Germans in Eastern Eu the Japanese in China are the vil of the past and investors in a pro ous future. History is full of irony would help to promote political dom in the bargain, it would b greatest irony of all.



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LETTERS

[illegible]

Why [illegible] so many men rape. I [illegible] repeat it a step further, why do so many college men, men who presumably have a certain level of intelligence, education, and financial security, rape?

Perhaps otherwise respectable young men are caught up in *their* expected social role—being irresponsible, callous boys who will, in time, evolve into responsible family men and somehow miraculously repair the damage done in their youth. But I am afraid that I may never understand such behavior completely. The man who raped me five years ago was a downstairs neighbor in my freshman dorm. He was reasonably affluent and from an unbroken home. We took classes together and shared the same major. Does he realize how betrayed and angry I felt and continue to feel?

Perhaps he did not fully realize what he was doing. Perhaps he was raised with the belief that women's opinions do not count. Perhaps, by studying and educating men, we as a society might prevent date rape from being a part of the "normal" college experience for women and men. Somehow, in addition to encouraging young women to stand up for themselves, we need to make it clear to young men that the woman's consent does matter—and to a large number of women, nothing could matter more.

Mary B. Nisson
New York City

[illegible] solipsism [illegible] much of the writing on the subject of sexual harassment and violence by much-hyped feminists from all parts of the political spectrum. I am surprised, however, [illegible] critics are so quick to dismiss the outrage of those women who have been the target of offensive remarks: "If [a feminist's] self-respect was so easily shaken by an [illegible]"

[illegible] this magazine that some people believe liberal feminists are outraged by lascivious glances because, to them, "a leer con[illegible]

speak for all women. But I will sp[eak] for myself. I am outraged when so[me]one on the street grabs a part of [my] body, leers at me, or hisses an offen[sive] slur with sexual overtones, not bec[ause] I feel I am being "raped" by words[,] because I am reasonably certain th[at] have been targeted *because I am a yo[ung] woman*, perceived as vulnerable [and] incapable of responding with v[io]lence—a conclusion I think reas[on]able, since I hear no such indign[ation] when accompanied by a man.

If I were to brandish a loaded Gl[ock] I don't think I would be the recip[ient] of unwanted sexual slurs. Of cou[rse] countering a slur with potentially le[thal] violence is illegal, for good rea[son]. Maybe the conservative critics wo[uld] prefer that I console myself with s[ome] recognition of the inherent cowar[dice] of a man who singles me out for ve[rbal] abuse. Maybe they would have me [be] empowered by a "feeble" verba[l] tempt to undermine what Katie Ro[ute] might call my white, educated fem[inist] bulwark against victimization.

Other champions of empower[ment] might think that the best respo[nse] was suggested by the phone-in c[aller] Gaitskill heard on the radio, the [one] who said she would "beat the l[ights] out of a man who tried to touch [her] against her wishes. I have tried [this] tactic, and it failed miserably. On[ce] was physically attacked by a man [in a] suburban ATM. And I *did* fight b[ack]. I punched him again and again[,] hard as I could. As far as I could [tell] my response had no effect on the r[ape]. If he had attacked me becaus[e] thought I could not effectively de[fend] myself, he was correct.

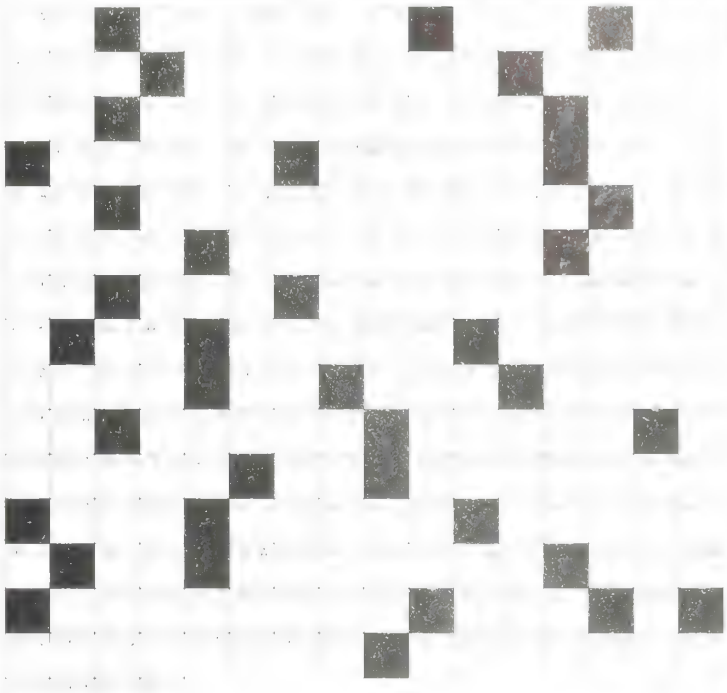
I consider myself lucky tha[t I] chose not to retaliate when I punc[hed] him; had I been on the streets of [New] York City, I would not have resp[ected] at all, physically or verbally. [I] fear that the person whose rema[rks] challenged would not hesitate to [fight] with fists, a knife, or a gun. An[yone] who tells me my fear is unjustif[ied] and due to a modern culture of [vic]timization or, worse, to a liberal [fem]inist doctrine of neo-Victo[rian] protectionism should descend [from] his or her ivory tower and, to p[ara]phrase Camille Paglia, "get real."

Linda Rattner
New York City

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 138

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 67.



WORDS

ACROSS

A. Popular seasonal song from 1857 by Lines Pierpont (2 wds.) 67 27 183 55 195 37 [illegible]

B. Continued [illegible]

C. Fifty towers attached to mosques [illegible]

D. Deprived of contents [illegible]

F. Draw, tie [illegible]

F. Tropical American plant, source of tapioca [illegible]

G. 1977 Woody Allen hit (2 wds.) [illegible]

H. Nonsyncretic [illegible] 26 86 93 102 151

I. Water nymphs [illegible] 71 147 43 25 113 58

J. Gives right to [illegible] 57 115 46 191 116 168 139 176

K. Makes return for [illegible] 185 106 48 20 66 97

L. Once-author, illustrator, composer (1776–1822) whose "tales" inspired Offenbach [illegible] 69 164 88 24 1 [illegible]

M. Bocotian hunter in Greek myth, celestial constellation [illegible] 192 121 200 47 144

N. Large kangaroo, also called [illegible]

O. Television, journalism [illegible] (2 wds.)

P. [illegible]

Q. [illegible]

R. Absurd [illegible] 52 [illegible]

S. [illegible]

T. Searching [illegible] (2 wds.)

U. "Unto the [illegible] thought/ And [illegible] [illegible] 50 193 4 104 44

V. Right-angled [illegible] 33 9 40 31 145 136 [illegible]

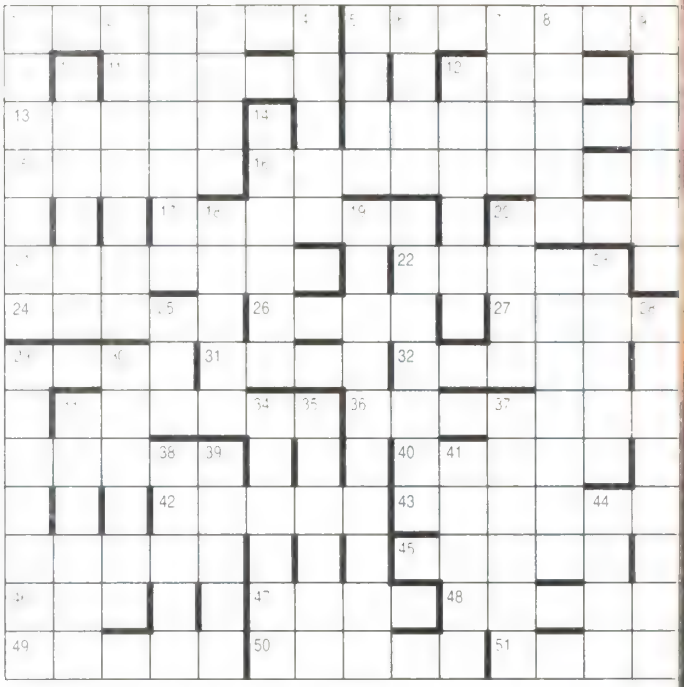
W. [illegible] [illegible] 54 161 187 [illegible] 94

X. [illegible] variance with the main [illegible] [illegible] 38 123 204 118 [illegible]

Y. [illegible]

Z. [illegible]

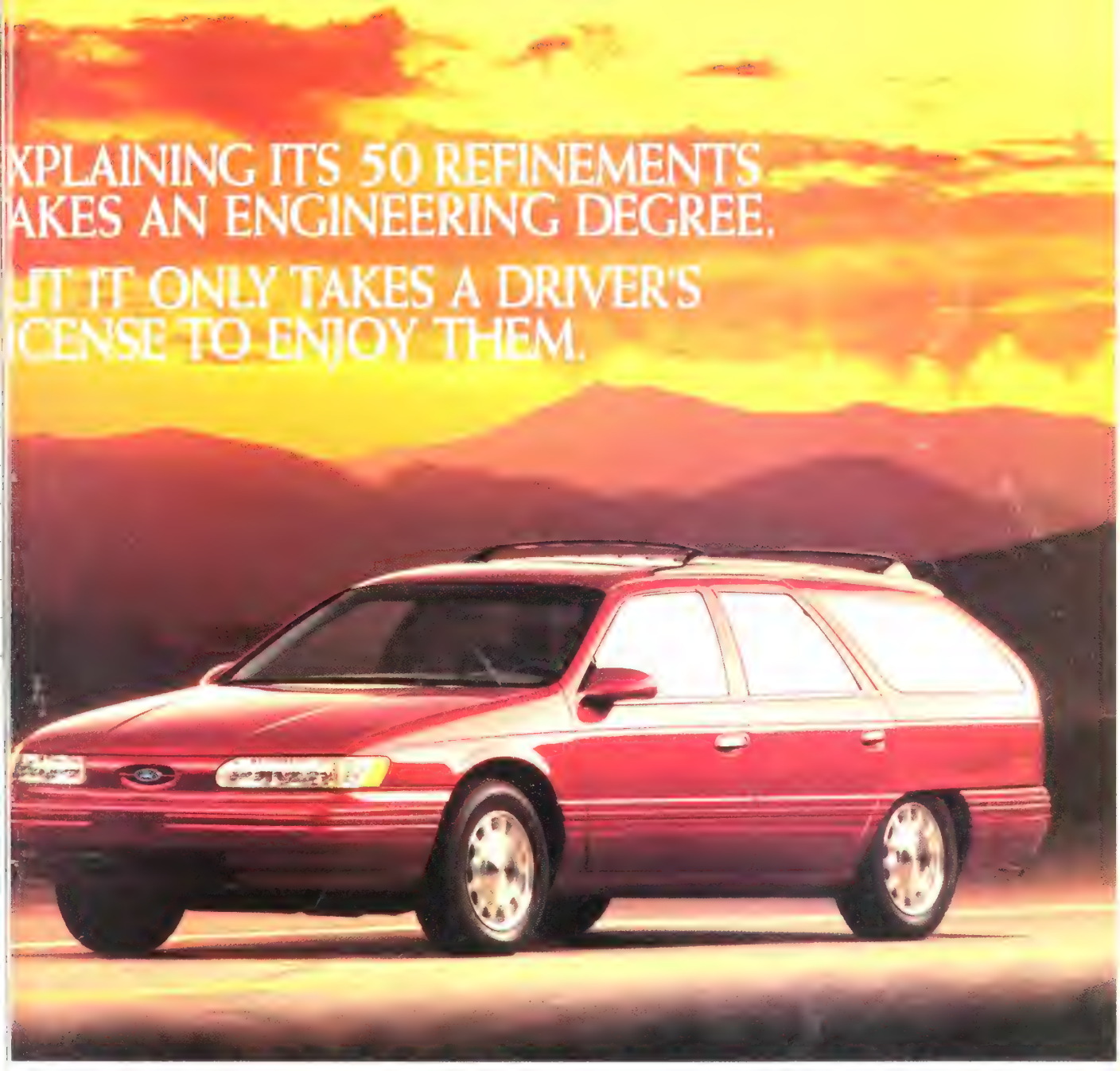
PUZZLE



Restricted home for crustaceans? (7)
Moralist without a retrogressive attitude (4)
Mother of 47 is tilling dream: a rest (4)
unfortunately (9, *two words*)
Scenery: empty chairs (4)
Set off charge about Reagan's inaugural (4)
Trembling, dared to be different (5)
Boy tipped about hard Hollywood redhead (4)
Bloody awful dream it Ma's included (3)
Painted, had a double marriage? (5)
Pieces for stopping influence by Poles (4)
Leaders of Sparta took outing around here! (4)
Where service may be held ... strive to take one in (4)

5. Measure Conservative raised (3)
6. Eggs becoming rank, one hears (3)
7. How habit gets started the wrong way? Nonsense (3)
8. Alcoholic drink said to provide stiff support? (4)
9. Old fashioned: fruit with fifth of brandy (5)
10. Hiding inside for a tornado—a windy one (6)
12. Small; lean; skimpy (5)
14. North Carolina enthralls you? On the contrary, from that place! (6)
18. Elvis, trading volume for distance, gets edge back (5)
19. Claret's all spilled—it's on the dinner table (10, *two words*)
20. Charge assumes ultimate character of innocent party (4)
23. Deist struggles with natural ups and downs (5)
25. One of the Khans is lay about (3)
28. Lumpy appearance—I stood out in New York (8)
29. Doesn't eat much—that is masked by drinking problem (5)
30. Long rebound by Cleveland's center (4)
33. Money one's taken in by swindle (4)
34. Quiet fault ... makes confession (6)
35. Short skirt said to be exceeding the bounds of good taste (6, *hyph.*)
37. Drink, Lucha clinic attempts finally succeed (6, *two words*)
38. Raised snipe, covering ... (3)
39. ... the old South? Certainly (3)
41. Complaint stung church (5)
44. Gov't agency responsible for continents of the New World? (4)

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UT IT ONLY TAKES A DRIVER'S
CENSE TO ENJOY THEM.



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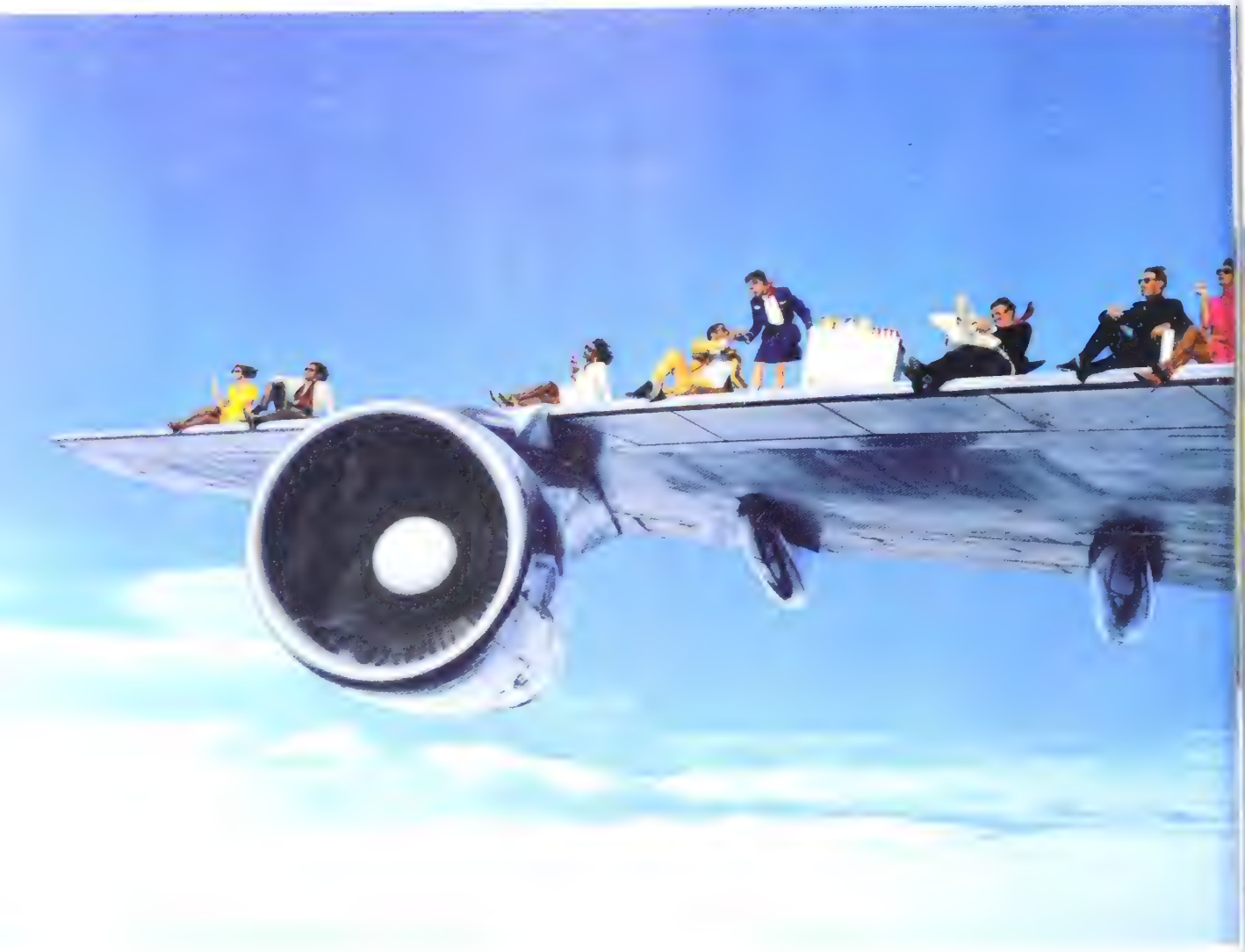
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HARPER'S



TICKET TO THE FAIR

Wherein our reporter gorges himself on corn dogs, gapes at terrifying rides, savors the odor of pigs, exchanges unpleasantries with tattooed carnies, and admires the loveliness of cows

By David Foster Wallace

◆

MAKING KITSCH FROM AIDS

A Disease With a Gift Shop of Its Own

By Daniel Harris

THE FINE ART OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

er Day in Court

Schapiro

ven Millhauser, and

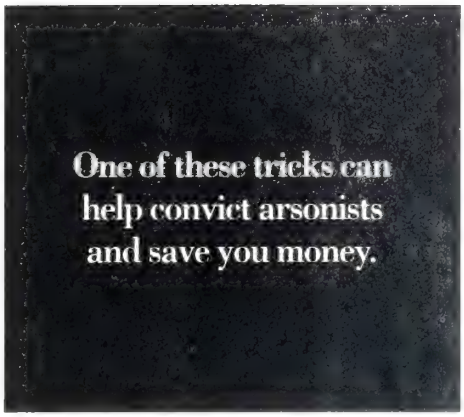
ice in Riverside, California


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HARPER'S

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JULY 1994

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LETTERS

The Pope and I

[illegible] prised at John Paul II's notion that there are "universal moral wrongs," such as abortion and adultery, that "transcend eras and cultures." The fact that she might be shocked by such dictums while others find common sense in these words reflects the current dichotomy within the Roman Catholic

Harrison's problem—though she seems not to realize it—is not with the Pope but with the papacy and the Church itself. John Paul II's teachings are no different—qualitatively, doctrinally—from what the Church has taught for centuries: respect for life, the dignity of the human person, the sanctity of marriage, and the existence of right and wrong. That these [illegible] become quaint or even slightly ridiculous neither undercuts their legitimacy nor relieves the Church of its

So the Pope's message is nothing [illegible] world bent on denying and defying it. The more accustomed we become [illegible] bounds of our sinful nature?

The only worthwhile reason for becoming affiliated with any religion is because one believes it possesses and teaches truth. Those who would opt for a Catholic Church more closely molded to personal tastes and modern mores are not seeking truth; they are merely grasping for approval.

[illegible]
Cincinnati

Barbara Grizzuti Harrison's soul-searching sexual memoirs exemplify the general inadequacy of all orthodox religions. Instead of promoting self-understanding in their followers, these religions preach indoctrination and "self-denial." The arbitrary association of physical pleasure with sin and guilt is a cornerstone of this well-entrenched system of social control dressed in the trappings of spirituality.

In contrast, authentic psycho-spiritual traditions (e.g., Christian and Jewish mysticism, Zen Buddhism, Sufism) understand that sexual repression in any form—officially sanctioned or otherwise—is disharmonious and counterproductive to spiritual growth and often damaging to the emotional health of ordinary individuals. These practices recognize the human sexual drive as a powerful force that must be given a creative (and guilt-free) outlet.

It is sad that so many good Catholics and other religionists like Harrison must wrestle with the Church-conjured demons of sin and guilt in the bed of love and joyous pleasure.

A. Wayne Senzee
Phoenix

As a practicing Roman Catholic, I ·mpathize with Barbara Harrison's ·cussion of what is good in the urch and what is vain, petty, and lish. But I find myself in deep dis-cement with her central thesis t conscience alone should be an ividual's supreme moral guidepost, l that John Paul II does not under-nd this.

One can perceive that Harrison, o was brought up as a Jehovah's Wit-s (and thus taught not to acknowl-ge the individual conscience), wants greatest freedom bestowed upon conscience. The Church acknowl-ges the central role of the individu-but recognizes that our conscience ne can never quite do the job of ding us: we can be misled about at is good and bad, right and wrong. erefore, we need help shaping and ming our conscience—help from ipture, from theologians, and from magisterium (which is not, as Har-n seems to think, *merely* a bunch of men but the authority and power of Church to teach God's truth). That help, of course, is precisely what the Pope is attempting to provide with the encyclicals he writes—nothing more, nothing less.

Gregory Roper
Ripon, Wis.

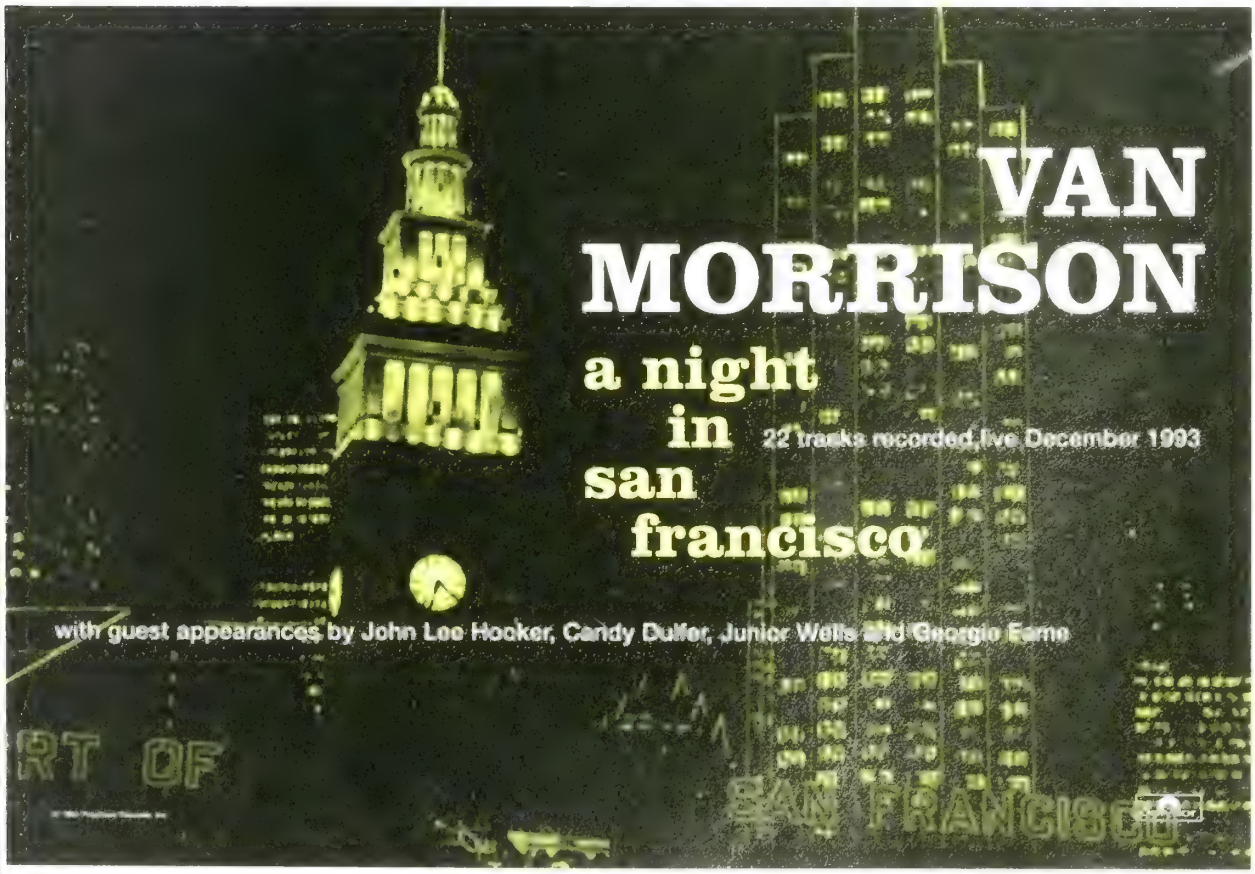
The Life of the Right-to-Die Movement

Anne Fadiman's nostalgic obituary of the *Hemlock Quarterly* and its "how-to" mission ["Death News: Requiem for the *Hemlock Quarterly*," April] overlooks an important change in the direction of the Hemlock Society U.S.A. and the voice of that change, the bimonthly journal *TimeLines*, of which I am the editor. Fadiman's self-admitted voyeuristic pleasure in reading the *Hemlock Quarterly* and her obsession with suicide methods have blinded her to today's political climate, in which physician-assisted suicide is being debated not only by the anonymous "Mrs. F." but also by physicians, legislators, and religious leaders.

Would Fadiman have us research and publish bizarre new ways for terminally ill people to end their lives? Self-deliverance literature already exists—in early issues of the *Hemlock Quarterly* and in Derek Humphry's book *Final Exit*, which we make available to our members. It's time to *change* the law rather than merely discuss ways around it. If *TimeLines* focuses on political coverage and encourages its members to send "pro-active postcards" to their legislators, it's because our members want to institute this change and need to know *how*. We know this to be true—Hemlock members were the major financial force behind right-to-die initiative campaigns in Washington and California.

By saying that Hemlock has "drifted to the center in an effort to distance itself from the radical new organizations," Fadiman seems to want to chastise the current Hemlock Society for choosing a credible path of debate and education. Without getting into a discussion of what's "radical" (or

Continued on page 84



NOTEBOOK

Morte de Nixon

By Lewis H. Lapham

When Nixon died on April 22 in New York City, at the age of eighty-one, the national news media pronounced him a great American and told the story of [illegible]. The assembled dignitaries on the weekend television shows solemnly mourned the passing of a benevolent sage, a figure of "historic proportions" and "towering size," who had weathered the storms of obloquy and defeat and so proved the theorem of an American success. The Sunday newspaper sermons reiterated the theme of redemption, and William Safire, the *New York Times* columnist who had once served as Nixon's speechwriter, provided the middle A to which the rest of the media orchestra tuned their instruments: "Richard Nixon . . . proved there is no political wrongdoing so scandalous that it cannot be expiated by years of useful service; no humiliation so painful that it cannot be overcome by decades of selfless sagacity . . ."

The sentence deliberately shifts the weight of judgment from the public to the private man, from the realm of law (in which magistrates uphold sworn oaths) to the realm of conscience (in which citizens answer only to their good intentions and their aerobics instructors), from the political forum to *Oprah*. The choir of sound opinion hummed the requiem in an arrangement by Lawrence Welk: "An Indomitable Man, An Incurable Loneliness" —the *New York Times*; "He would have been a great, great man had somebody loved him"—Hugh Sidey; "Figure of gentle pathos . . . impossible not to feel, simply, sorry for him"— *The New Yorker*; "So much kin to the rest of us that I never felt the faintest impulse to apologize for liking him"— Murray Kempton; "Inspired and inflamed the American imagination for half a century . . . a giant, right up there with Citizen Kane and Moby [illegible] the *New York Times*.

Stray voices of dissent appeared in *The Nation* and *The New Republic*, but for the most part nobody addressing a [illegible] audience said more than a few polite words about the Vietnam War or the deceased's manifest contempt for the American people. The prominent eulogists spoke of Nixon's "triumph over adversity," not of the numberless dead in Indochina; of Nixon as "the comeback kid," not of the damage he had inflicted on the nation's political culture; of Nixon's youth and early sorrows, his loneliness, his "vulnerable awkwardness" and "longing for respect." All present agreed that what Nixon had done he had done for the most American of reasons—because as he himself once said to somebody who asked him why he told so many lies, he had to win. That's the thing you don't understand. The important thing is to win." Unable to contradict so patriotic a truism (offered by one of the news magazines as a further proof of the former president's subtle grasp of world affairs), the eulogists absolved Nixon of his sins and pardoned his crimes because he had worked so hard to commit them, thus demonstrating, in another of Safire's sophisms, "a great engagement with life."

The flattering sentiment accompanied Nixon's body west to California and on the Tuesday that it was brought to Yorba Linda the dispatch in the *New York Times* began with a flourish of Shakespearean trumpets and drums. "In a scene worthy of 'King Lear,' the usually sunny California sky unleashed thunder, lightning, rain and hail today as Richard M. Nixon's body returned to his birthplace in a plain wooden coffin covered by a flag." At the burial service on Wednesday afternoon the illusion of grandeur was somewhat more difficult to sustain, possibly because so many of the well-manicured mourners at



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specific motives and agendas don't account for the grace bestowed on so wooden and paltry a politician as Richard Nixon, and I suspect that his translation into a statue follows from our common wish to declare, now and forever, world without end, our collective innocence. If Nixon is innocent, we are all innocent; if Nixon can murder nearly 1 million people in Indochina [illegible] no purpose other than his own self-aggrandizement, then who among us cannot cheat our children, or falsify our tax returns, or swindle the customers, bribe the judge, and abandon the girl. Forgive Nixon, and we forgive ourselves. Why else go to the trouble of [illegible] and the disgraced president into the elder statesman and wise diplomat remarkable for his telling of [illegible]

Certainly it was a metamorphosis accomplished against long and heavy odds. Nixon's incompetence as a president shows up on almost every page of the published record, and a close reading of the small print suggests that his gifts as a statesman can best be compared to John Grisham's genius as a novelist or Madonna's talent for dancing. It's true that as president, Nixon pursued the opening to China, which, given the circumstances, was a feat of diplomacy comparable to conceding the existence of the Pacific Ocean, and it's also true that most of the time he knew which telephones to tap, but with respect to the more difficult questions confronting his administration (most especially the ones in Indochina), Nixon was consistently and pitiably wrong. He believed in the chimera of the domino theory, and he thought that the United States could win the Vietnam War if only the air force dropped another twelve tons of explosives on another four peasants. He was [illegible] bombing and the subsequent invasion [illegible] sanctuaries that he meant to destroy didn't exist. At the end he was even wrong about the character of the American people. Thinking that they would applaud his cleverness and what he was pleased to imagine as his striking resemblance to both Teddy Roosevelt and Charles de Gaulle, he never understood why so many college students hated the sound of his voice.

Nor did Nixon's record on domestic affairs provide the iconographers with many proofs of "historic proportions" and "towering size." As ignorant of Kissinger about the economic consequences of his foreign policies and indifferent to the concerns of the American electorate, Nixon (again for reasons having solely to do with his own reelection) set in motion a corrosive inflation as well as a divisive racial politics from which the country has yet to recover.

The publicists also encountered various [illegible] laundry of Nixon's gangsterism. Whenever possible he substituted palace intrigues for candid debate, and the standard biographies suggest that he felt freely at ease only in the company of his own toadying courtiers or in the presence of military despots like Ferdinand Marcos and the Shah of Iran and I think it probable that he envied the Soviets their freedom of criminal [illegible]

He was constantly scribbling furious directives in the margins of the daily press summaries, instructing his henchmen to rid him of enemies both real and imagined. His verbs were always violent—"Get someone to hit him," "Fire him," "Freeze him," "Cut him," "Knock him down," "Dump him." His hatred of free speech was apparent in his every gesture and expression, and when confronted with any obstacle to his will, he invariably exhibited the autocrat's instinct to coerce, break in, lie, and suppress. On one of the tape recordings impounded by the Watergate investigation, Nixon speaks to Chuck Colson about the grim task of chastising the legion of his enemies in a voice hard to reconcile with the image of the benevolent sage: "Okay we will get them . . . Get them on the floor and step on them, crush them, show no mercy. And we'll stick the heels in, step on them hard and twist . . . right, Chuck, right."

Although by the summer of 19[illegible] the standard iconographies routinely mentioned Nixon's "brilliant" intellect and "enigmatic" character, neither adjective is easy to align with the notes. As Nixon's national security advis-

ssinger used to make fun of Nixon's
neatball mind." He often telephoned
more sardonic confederates to read
oud from the president's memoranda,
ughing at the pomposity of the lan-
age that glossed over the threadbare
iptiness of the thought. Nixon's sev-
al books extend and annotate the
ce. The writing is poor, the argu-
nts trite, the author's voice as sen-
atious as that of a latter-day Polonius.
nd of belaboring the obvious and
ry pleased with himself in his wiz-
d's hat, Nixon is forever telling his
aders that the Russians cannot be
usted, that a surprising number of
ople exist in a state of poverty, and
that war isn't a game of
Parcheesi.

Nor does the record show Nixon
ong the more complex, let alone
igmatic, figures appearing on the
nerican political stage over the last
irty-odd years. Although he was un-
able, he was also tiresomely pre-
ctable. His principal biographers
animously attest to the rigidity of
s character and its uncanny lack of
velopment; even his mother said of
n, "I never knew a person to change
little." Loyal only to his invincible
fishness, Nixon in any and all cir-
mstances could be counted upon to
here to three inflexible rules of pro-
dure: (1) To tell the expedient and
f-serving lie, (2) To ask only one
portant question of the other peo-
e at the table (i.e., "What's in it for
chard Nixon?"), (3) To unctuously
oclaim his own innocence.

Bryce Harlow, another of Nixon's
unselors, once compared him to "a
rk . . . push him down and he pops
ht back up." Precisely like a cork or
nechanical toy, Nixon is forever say-
g, "I am not a crook," or "When the
esident does it, that means it is not
egal," and because it always turns
t that he is a crook (or a liar, or a
ll, or a cheat) the story is never very
eresting. Neither are the adventures
a cork.

Corks, however, possess the virtue of
edictably rising and falling like the
icatures made for afternoon soap
era, forever scaling the battlements
melodrama and falling back into the
at of bathos, and it was in his ca-
city as an actor temporarily on loan
from *As the World Turns* that Nixon served the purposes of the mass media. Reassuringly inexplicable or further development, he never failed to come up with the *cliché juste* (about his wife's "respectable Republican cloth coat" or "the little cocker spaniel dog, Checkers"), and he was always there to be, once famously said, "to kick around" like a cheap toy or a stuffed bear.

Like most everything else made by and for the mass media, Nixon was a collaboration, a product of the corporate imagination in the manner of a Broadway musical, a Hollywood action film, or the CBS evening news. He was cast as the suspect wanted for the murder of everyone's brightest hopes and best instincts, and the caricature was so broadly drawn that it could absorb or blot out very high quotients of guilt, fear, and self-loathing. Diverted by the melodrama of Richard M. Nixon, the lonely urchin from Whittier, California, who found fame and fortune in the nation's capital (found it and lost it and then found it again), we could forget what it was that he did—forget what was at risk in the Watergate conspiracies and Indochina, forget how many people died. The bias of the mass media favors the personal over the impersonal, the actor over the act, and the caricature of Nixon allowed us to preserve the innocence of the American dream by transforming a bleak and terrible tragedy into prime-time situation comedy.

As is the habit of actors, Nixon brooded over the worth and beauty of his image in the press, often peering through the newspapers for two and three hours at a time, and when I listened to Washington reporters talk about his obsessive marking up of their copy I thought of the mechanical toy reading the label on its box, trying to figure out what it was that the manufacturers had in mind. I'm not sure that he ever fully understood the instructions, which possibly explains why he so often mistook his own character or felt compelled, especially in his later years, to speak of himself in the third person. Prior to his first meeting with Russian Premier Leonid Brezhnev in the spring of 1972, Nixon directed Kissinger, who proceeded him to Moscow, to announce him as a man who was "direct, honest, strong." He was, in fact, devious, dishonest, and weak, but Kissinger at the time was still wearing the White House livery and let the remark pass without amendment. On the eve of another of his departures to Moscow, Nixon compared himself both with Hamlet's father's ghost on the morning of D-day and with William the Conqueror on the afternoon prior to the Battle of Hastings. I had read in the eleventh century.

Among the reported sightings of Nixon impersonating a public statue, the most recent appeared in *The New Yorker* on May 9, in Michael Korda's breathlessly admiring account of an August 1989 dinner party at Nixon's house in Saddle River, New Jersey. Nixon always liked to conduct impromptu seminars on the topics of geography and world history, and while the brandy was being handed around, he took it into his head to enlighten and improve two Chinese diplomats recently arrived from Beijing. Meaning for his words to be carried grandly back to China (as if they were emeralds on a velvet cushion), Nixon, speaking very slowly, very solemnly, said, "When Nixon was President and Leader of the Free World, he found that *firmness paid*. You tell them that." Somewhat later in the evening, while showing his guests around the house, he opened the door to his study and announced, "This is where Nixon works." "This is the desk at which Nixon wrote all his books."

The next question, "Who wrote Nixon?" Korda was too polite to ask, but if I had to answer it, I would guess that we all wrote Nixon. Even citizens as nominally liberal as Tom Wicker and Murray Kempton found in the caricature the hope of redemption. Wicker's *[illegible]*, derives its melancholy and elegiac tone from the author's sense of his own failures, and Kempton, writing his maudlin farewell on the occasion of Nixon's death, said, "His sheer vulnerability so fills the memory as to expel all musings about his place in history." No wonder the media were so loud with lamentation. So many of us have so much for which we wish to be forgiven that I would like to suggest that the not too distant future President Clinton suggests naming a national holiday in Nixon's honor. ■



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HARPER'S INDEX

Percentage of the thirty-six wars currently being fought that are civil wars : 100

Percentage that are being monitored by U.N. peacekeepers : 41

Number of these conflicts that began more than a decade ago : 21

Number of U.S. veterans of the Persian Gulf War who have filed for environmental-hazard disability since 1991 : 3,593

Number of these who have been granted benefits : 282

Number of physicians who are running for the U.S. House or Senate this year : 26

Chances that an employee of a U.S. physician in private practice receives employer-provided health insurance : 1 in 2

Factor by which the likelihood that a U.S. heart-attack victim will receive surgery exceeds that of a Canadian : 2

Portion of all U.S. hospital revenues generated by cardiac-related procedures : 1/4

Chances that a person admitted to a U.S. emergency room does not require emergency care : 1 in 2

Ratio of the number of Americans who cite physicians as their primary source of medical information to those citing TV : 1:2

Percentage change, between 1992 and 1993, in the amount of time network news programs devoted to crime coverage : +100

Number of guns manufactured in the United States each hour : 360

Price of a copy of Kurt Cobain's death certificate from Post Mortem Arts in Seattle : $25

Number of countries in which the average life expectancy is less than fifty years : 23

Number of the fifteen former Soviet republics whose death rates have risen since 1989 : 9

Percentage of Russians who say they would like to return to their country's "pre-1985 situation" : 21

Rank of Karl Marx among the authors most often cited in academic journals, worldwide : 1

Number of Thomas Jefferson's slaves who escaped to join the British during the American Revolution : 22

Percentage of African-Americans who say that whites are "insensitive to other people" : 76

Percentage who say that Asian-Americans are "unscrupulously crafty and devious in business" : 42

Ratio of the number of lawyers in the United States to the number of janitors : 1:3

Percentage of U.S. hazardous-waste sites that have been cleaned up since the EPA's Superfund was established in 1980 : 18

Estimated percentage of the $6.7 billion spent on Superfund cleanups since then that has gone to lawyers : 85

Number of American fish species that are endangered, according to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service : 101

Number of Coney Island rides that have been designated New York City historical landmarks : 3

Number of American Indian tribes that own a casino license : 90

Number that are members of the InterTribal Bison Cooperative : 28

Estimated number of buffalo ranches, nationwide : 1,100

Number of participants in the annual Sidewalk Egg-Frying Contest held in Oatman, Arizona, last July 4 : 10

Rank of Missouri among states with the greatest number of deaths each year caused by hot weather : 1

Number of cows electrocuted by a faulty milking machine in Maidstone, England, last March : 33

Membership of the British Sausage Appreciation Society : 10,000

Number of unused condoms discovered last year aboard a 53-man German submarine sunk during World War II : 2,000

Number of Norman Rockwell paintings owned by Steven Spielberg : 14

Number of women asked to leave an exhibit of Rubens nudes in Toledo, Ohio, last winter because they were breast-feeding : 1

Participants in the annual Nude Chili Cookoff held at the Treehouse Fun Ranch in Devore, California, last July : 2,000

Membership of Internacia Naturista Organizo Esperantista, a club for nudist speakers of Esperanto, in Brussels : 233

Price of one week at the Klingon Language Camp in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota : $350

Figures cited are the latest available [illegible] of May [illegible] *[illegible] on page 5*

"Harper's Index" is a registered trademark.

READINGS

THE CONSERVATIVE CAVE-IN

Adapted from Dead Right, *by David Frum, to be published by Basic Books. Frum has worked as a columnist for* Forbes, the Wall Street Journal. *He lives in Toronto.*

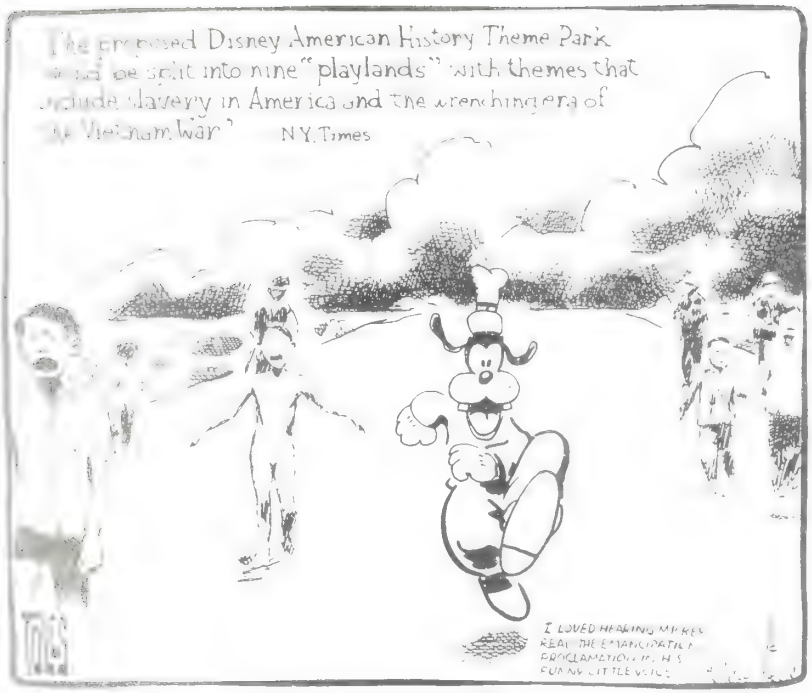
Since [illegible] conservatism has stood for two overarching principles: anticommunism abroad and radical reduction in the size, cost, and bossiness of the federal government at home. Communism is dead, and the government has lost much of its zest, for the time being anyway. The bossiness remains, but we've grown accustomed to it and are pretty fed up with it all the same. The country's leading conservative politicians and intellectuals may attack this or that ridiculous feature of overweening government, they may propose this or that reform—Bill Clinton's plan to reorganize the American medical system, but radical criticism of the very idea that Washington should extract and redistribute one quarter of the nation's wealth has simply pe-

[illegible] preserve Social Security [illegible] tanks, and academia, you can t[illegible]ith that the left

gle-parent family, tumbling educational standards, immigration, crime, ethnic Balkanization—conservative magazines and conservative conversation bubble with ferment over these. About morality and nationality, conservatives have plenty to say. But their opposition to Washington's role as a conduit for the redistribution of wealth has cooled, when it has not disappeared [illegible]

Conservatives have lost their zeal for advocating minimal government not because they have decided that big government is desirable but because they have wearily concluded that trying to reduce it is hopeless, and that even the task of preventing its further growth will probably exceed their strength. What conservatives [illegible] is that most Americans *like* big government. The major domestic spending programs—Social Security, Medicare, aid to farmers and to veterans—are all hugely popular, and especially popular, ironically, with the [illegible] constituency. Republicans have therefore avoided these topics, not so much from calculating cowardice but as if in the thrall of some genetic predisposition. In a democratic culture, feeling yourself separate from the people is distressing, even frightening: [illegible] temptation than the desire to please the crowd, to say only what it wants to hear? Conservatives are fighting harder against gays in the military than against the [illegible] They know that on the former issue the crowd will be with them and fear that on the latter, the crowd will not.

In [illegible] Pentagon [illegible] appeared, they were for conservatives a testing and disillusioning time. Conservatives owned



From the Buffalo News.

[illegible] and had [illegible] they dominated the Senate for six years; and by the end of the decade exercised near complete control over the federal judiciary. And yet, every time they set about to undo the work of Franklin Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon

the work they had damned for nearly half a [illegible] them. They didn't dare, and they realized that they didn't dare. Their moment came and flickered.

The Reagan interlude misled conservatives into thinking that the American people were with them—not in a casual, happenstance sense but deeply, even when conservative ideology [illegible] much more it would give them pleasure to do. And as they have discovered the uncomfortable truth—that the people are *not* with them, that Americans are willing to have government reduced only until they feel the pinch—conservatives, instead of holding fast, have adapted to the people. That adaptation explains the triviality and cynicism that have characterized too much of conservative politics over the past few years—the proclivity for gimmicks like enterprise zones and school vouchers, the [illegible] goals without upending liberalism's most popular achievements.

That is why, despite all the caterwauling about Reagan's supposedly savage budget cuts, not one major spending program (except for revenue sharing with the states, which was not really a program at all) was eliminated during his presidency. That is why federal spending (adjusted for inflation) rose by 50 percent over the eight Reagan years. And it is why by Inauguration Day 1993, the average effective federal tax rate had returned to within one tenth of a percentage point of its level on Inauguration Day 1981. Nor was this the fault of backsliding Bushies: more than half the Reagan tax cut was lost between 1985 and 1989.

The early 1990s are in some ways more conducive to conservatism than the 1980s were. Slow economic growth has squeezed government budgets, especially state and local budgets. Far more than in the 1980s, governors and mayors face voters who profess to prefer budget cuts to tax increases. But those same voters continue to expect lavishly equipped suburban high schools, subsidized tuition at state colleges, toll-free highways, and environmental improvement at others' expense. What could be more tempting to a politician than to teach voters to blame taxes and regulation not on the requirements of the middle class but on the inordinate demands of the poor? What could be more politically reckless than to attack bloated education, highway, and farm budgets, which largely benefit the middle class? Unfortunately, the refusal to take that apparently reckless course dooms all

T

nists, moralists, and nationalists — each led by a prominent political figure: Jack Kemp, William Bennett, and Patrick Buchanan, respectively. They differ about many things, but all agree that

and to begin using it.

sensus, with virtually everyone agreeing about the proper functions of government, even if the parties quibble over details. That's how academic political scientists and earnest liberals have always wanted politics to work. The leading political book of 1992, E. J. Dionne's *The War Against Public Life: Why Americans Hate Politics*, argued that Americans would be a lot likelier to vote if politicians quit arguing about abortion and flag burning and filled their speeches instead with meaty details of the latest highway bill or the fine-tuning of the earned-income tax credit.

I suspect, however, that the abatement of the fifty-year struggle over the size and role of the federal government will in fact make politics a lot nastier. If everyone agrees about big government, the only way to mobilize and excite voters is precisely to emphasize the wide and

backgrounds, races, and moral convictions. The future will hold not an endless succession of solemn policy debates but more of the kind of furor that surrounded the issue of gays in the military — more of the kind of politics that Midge Decter had in mind when she contended that Reagan's electoral victories were due "not so much to a wish for radical new policies as to an open declaration of war over the culture. And a culture war, as the liberals understood far better than did their conservative opponents, is a war to the death. For a culture war is not a battle over policy, though policy in many cases gives it expression; it is rather a battle about matters of the spirit."

Conservatives may be able to exploit that culture war in order to win political power. But exercising power—that is a different business. Conservatives suffer a very different political problem these days than liberals do. Avowed liberals have a difficult time winning power in this country; avowed conservatives do not. You no longer get far in public life by preaching that the poor are poor because someone else is not poor, or that criminals can be rehabilitated, or that American troops should get their orders from the United Nations. There's no liberal version of Rush Limbaugh. However, when conservatism's glittering generalities ("You are overtaxed") turn into legislative specifics ("You

), we run into as much trouble in midsession as liberals do at election time. Twelve years of twisting and struggling to escape this snare have merely entangled conservatives ever more deeply in it. The public loves our themes but not our policies; it shares our goals but rejects the only methods by which those goals can be attained. Is there a way out?

Only one: conservative intellectuals should learn to care a little less about the electoral prospects of the Republican Party, indulge less in policy cleverness and ethnic demagoguery, and do what intellectuals of all descriptions are obliged to do — practice honesty and pay the price.

[Note]

ANOTHER FOND NIXON MEMORY

Haldeman while he met with President Richard Nixon on May 12, 1971. It appeared in "About Nixon: An Insider's Notes From the Oval Office," an article by

Mitchell, recently acquired microfiche copies of 150,000 pages of notes made by Haldeman while he was serving as Nixon's chief of staff. The note below had never before been published.

T

knowledge. The baseball game on WTOP was rained out last night. CBS [ ] then put on a show

rification of homosex. Made Arch look bad homos look good. Is this common on TV



From Variations on a Theme by Queen Nefertete, *a series of fourteen sculptures by Billy Wilder and Bruce Houston. The heads were shown last winter at Louis Stern Fine Arts, in Beverly Hills, California. Wilder directed twenty-four films between 1933 and 1978; Houston is a San Diego artist whose work is included in the collections of Martin Mull, Norman Lear, and the Smithsonian Art Institute.*

[Complaint]

UNJUST DESSERTS

From a complaint filed in April by Jennifer Snyder in Palm Beach County, Florida, circuit court. Snyder is suing RJ Gators Greenacres, a Florida restaurant known for its "pie in the face" tradition; for five dollars, a customer can have a waiter push a pie made of whipped cream into another customer's face.

1. On October 29, 1993, the Plaintiff, Jennifer Snyder, was planning to have dinner with her family and friends at a restaurant operated by RJ Gators Greenacres, Inc., in Greenacres, Florida.

2. At that time and place, an employee of RJ Gators pushed a cream pie in the face of the Plaintiff, Jennifer Snyder, allegedly at the request of another customer.

3. This employee came back later to push another pie into the Plaintiff's face.

4. The Plaintiff requested that the waiter not push any more pies into her face.

5. A second waiter then approached Jennifer Snyder with another pie and attempted to push it into her face, despite the Plaintiff's directive to leave her alone and not push any more pies into her face.

6. Jennifer Snyder moved in order to avoid being hit by this second pie and in the process hit her head on the corner of the booth she was sitting in.

7. The employees of RJ Gators Greenacres then struck the Plaintiff, against her expressed will, with two additional pies.

8. The Defendant, RJ Gators Greenacres, was obligated to the Plaintiff and others similarly situated to provide a safe dining experience. The Defendant was negligent for the following reasons:

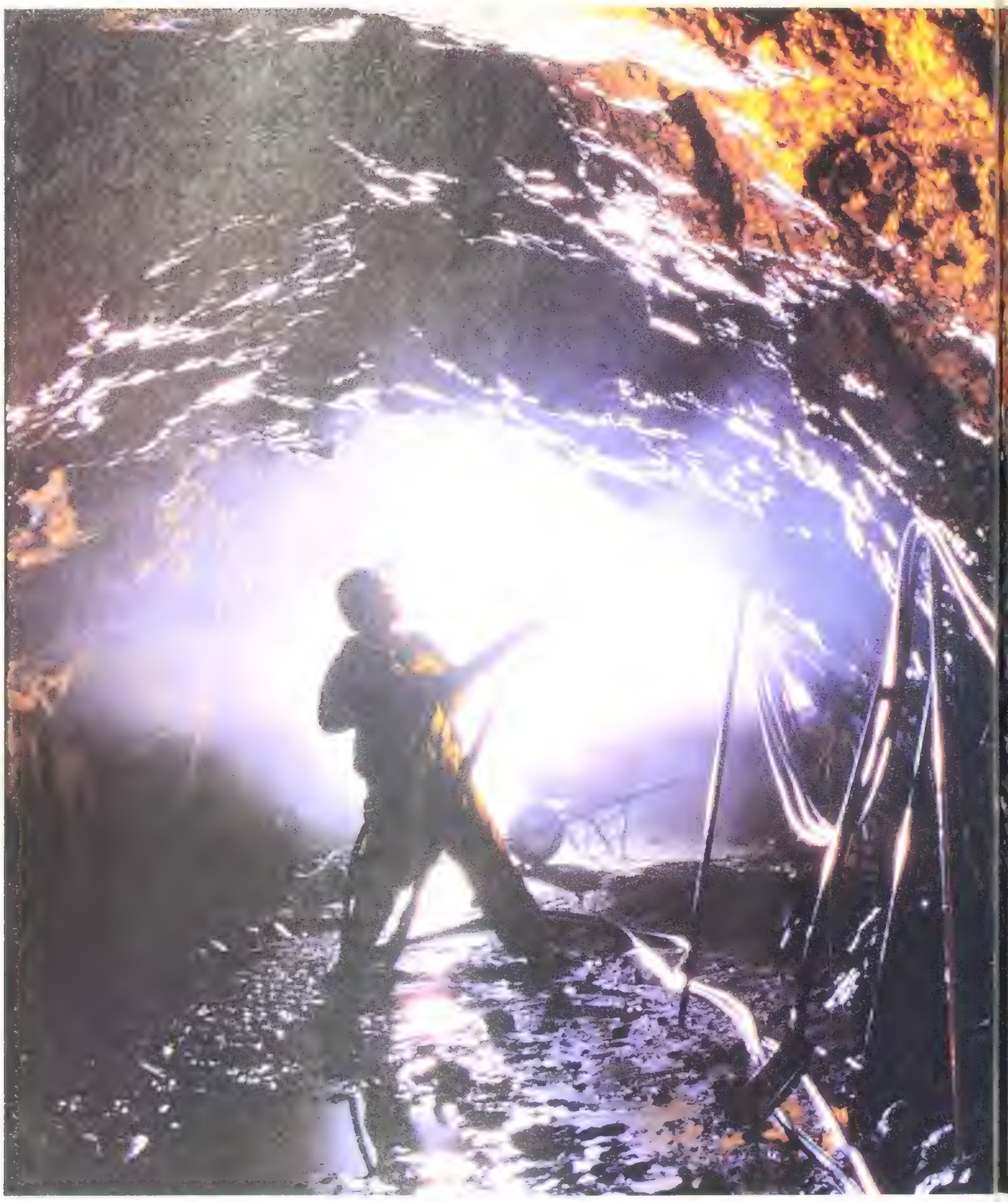
A. The Defendant's employees refused to comply with the request and directive of the Plaintiff to leave her alone and not push another pie into her face.

B. The Defendant failed to inform all its customers of the risks and hazards involved in eating at the restaurant as a result of the pies that may be pushed into their faces.

C. The Defendant failed to provide a safe area for its customers when they were having pies pushed into their faces.

D. The Defendant failed to teach its employees a manner of pushing pies into the faces of their customers that would prevent injuries to the customers who were being hit by the pies.

9. Due to the Defendant's negligence, the Plaintiff, Jennifer Snyder, suffered bodily injury and resulting pain and suffering; disability; disfigurement; mental anguish; aggravation of a previously existing condition; expense of hospitalization, medical and nursing care, and treatment; loss of earnings; loss of ability to earn money; and loss of the capacity for the enjoyment of life.



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U.S. POST MODERNISM



The postage stamps above, designed and printed by First Issue Reserved Edition (FIRE), an anonymous group of artists, were on display in March at Nohe Erickson, a New York City gallery. Although the stamps are intended as works of art, several collectors have successfully used them to mail letters. In addition to the Amy Fisher, Kill/Hate, and Mike Tyson designs shown above, FIRE has made stamps featuring guns, burning flags, and

MAIL BONDING

From the table of contents for Personal Letter-Works, *by Judi Barton and Nate Rosenblatt, a guide to writing personal and business letters, published by Round Lake Publishing, in Ridgefield, Connecticut. The book contains more than 400 sample letters [illegible] with computer software that allows the user to personalize the letters where needed.*

Sorry I Spoiled Your Party
[illegible]
Sorry My Pet Caused Trouble
Sorry I Burned a Hole in Your Sofa
Sorry I Drank Too Much
[illegible]
Sorry I Misunderstood Your Intentions
Sorry I Started a Fight

[illegible]

Your Lawn Needs Mowing
You Forgot to Return My Tools
Your Child Is Bullying Mine
Your Child Stole Something
Your Waiter Made Sexist Comments to Me
Your Salesperson Has an Offensive Odor

[illegible]

You Didn't Understand My Needs
My Guests Felt Snubbed by You
Your Behavior Embarrassed Me
You Set a Bad Example for My Children
[illegible] Me
I Won't Baby-sit for You Anymore
I Won't Give You a Letter of Reference
I Won't Lend You Money
Stop Harassing Our Daughter
Stop Seeing My Husband
I'm Having an Affair With Your Wife
You Have a Problem With Alcohol
You're a Bigot
Your Coaching Style Is Destructive
You Are No Longer Welcome in Our Home
Stop Stalking Me

Family and Friends

Dad Has to Have an Operation
Grandpa Died Peacefully
I Had a Miscarriage
My Husband Was Laid Off
Dear Mom and Dad, My Grades Were Awful
Dear Mom and Dad, Please Send Money
Dear Mom and Dad, I'm Pregnant

Dear Mom and Dad, I Want to Move Back Home
Dear Mom and Dad, I'm Gay
Repay the Money You Borrowed
Remove the Furniture You Have Stored in My Basement
I'm the Child You Gave Up for Adoption
It's Your Turn to Take Care of Grandma

[Tips]

LONG-DISTANCE PARENTING

From "Guilt Trips," a pamphlet of "positive parenting tips" created and distributed by MCI Telecommunications to parents who travel on business. More than 10,000 people have ordered the pamphlet since April

For parents, business trips often turn into guilt trips: guilt about missing important family events, guilt about missing everyday routines, guilt about leaving your loved ones behind. But there are positive parenting steps you can take to make your business travel less stressful and more enjoyable for the entire family.

Phone home

As obvious as it might seem, there are some proven guidelines that make phoning home more productive. If you simply ask "How are you?" when you call, you'll probably hear "I'm fine." End of conversation. Instead, ask specific questions like "Did you play on the jungle gym at school?" and "How was the T-ball game?" Talk about a current event you and your family might have seen on TV or in the newspaper. Talk about the weather at home and where you are. Use the same "separation sayings" you use at home. If you say "See you later, alligator" at home, say it before you hang up the phone.

Get the facts via fax

Fax machines are a great way to send or receive detailed messages. You can use them to help with homework even when you're in another city. They're also a terrific way to send personalized notes or other greetings—perhaps even a comic strip you can all chuckle over.

Play your cards right

Many parents make it a point to send postcards from all their travel destinations. Kids love getting mail addressed to them. You can make scrapbooks of all the postcards, personalizing them

[Movies]

HOORAY FOR HOLLYWELD

From "Top Ten Welding Movies of All Time," part of a press release issued in March by the American Welding Society, a trade association for welders, based in Miami. The AWS, which has [illegible] filmmakers, performers, and writers who have made "positive contributions" to welding, in April the group [illegible] "Weldie" awards, including citations to Jennifer Beals for Best Actress, James Cameron for Best Director, and Tom Clancy for Best Literary Treatment of Welding.

[illegible] (1983)—Arguably the [illegible] movie ever made. "*Flashdance* was a watershed for the welding industry, as it presented welding as an acceptable profession, regardless of gender," according to *Welding Journal* senior editor Andrew Cullison. A must-see for "rod burners" everywhere.

[illegible] (1994)—"We need a welder!" Gary Busey's desperate call for help epitomizes this Steven Seagal thriller that underscores the military-industrial complex's dependence on welding. Welders are portrayed as the "go to" guys when the chips are down. A favorite among underwater welders.

Aliens (1986)—Interplanetary marines use welding to keep the creature at bay and thus buy Sigourney Weaver much-needed time to regroup and fight back. Directed by James Cameron, a big-time welding fan.

Gung Ho (1986)—This Ron Howard film makes viewers aware of exactly how Japanese automakers, and subsequently Detroit, came to depend on welding in general and robotic welding in particular. According to Bob Irving, *Welding Journal*'s feature writer, "The car industry is very dependent on welding, especially if you consider that the average car has 3,000 to 4,000 spot welds." A cult favorite among members of the American Welding Society, Detroit Section.

The Road Warrior (1981)—Even in a post-nuclear world where gas is scarce and roving gangs of thugs abound, the welder is still very much needed. Sparks galore in the climactic ending.

Radio Flyer (1992)—[illegible] director Richard Donner chronicles the sometimes painful childhood of two brothers. In a moment of tenderness, the usually abusive stepfather [illegible] how the boys how to "lay a bead." Welders are people too, and, like other professionals, their jobs occasionally take a heavy toll on their personal lives.

ick while the parents are

time story is to take a duplicate storybook with

When you return home, keep in mind that

were away. Break out the popcorn. Put together your postcard scrapbooks. Make a party of it. Have fun.

WILL SPECIALIZE FOR FOOD

From "4[illegible]+ Things You Can Do With a Late De-

THE PACKAGING (AND RE-PACKAGING) OF A GENERATION

Adapted from Late Bloomers: The Declining Prospects of the Twentysomething Generation, *by David Lipsky and Alexander Abrams, to be pub-*[illegible] *Lipsky, a novelist, and Abrams, an attorney, are both in their late twenties.*

Anyone who has been reading the press for the last few years should by now be quite familiar with the shortcomings of "Generation X." As *The Atlantic* explained in 1992, people under thirty are "more comfortable shopping or playing than working or studying. . . . They watch too much TV . . . , cheat on tests, don't read newspapers." In 1993, the *Houston Chronicle* described today's young people as "poorly educated, politically apathetic [and] morally obtuse." The generation's attitude has been summed up by the media in a single word: "slacker." Faced with this chorus of derision, one can easily forget that five years ago the media's concerns about people in our generation—those born between 1961 and 1972—were altogether different.

Until 1990, the media's worry about people our age was not that we were growing up too reluctantly, or too apathetically, but that we were getting old too fast. We were *too* comfortable working and studying; we didn't know how to play. The *Los Angeles Times* warned that "Students Are All Business These Days." As early as 1984, Paul Johnson wrote a long essay in the *New York Times* speaking of "the harsh, dry, materialistic wind" that was sweeping across college campuses. For Johnson this was unquestionably a widespread phenomenon. Success, ambition, and determination were all being "glamorized." Johnson wrote that a student at Princeton had told him that "people here are interested in jobs and sex, in that order."

In a 1987 cover story for *The New York Times Magazine*, Bruce Weber wrote of traveling the country to interview sixty recent college graduates. "I returned," he wrote, "thinking that young people are older than they used to be." The author found his subjects to be "determined, career-minded, fiercely self-reliant." As he summarized his many interviews, "They are planners. They look ahead with certainty. They have priorities."

In 1989, *Fortune* ran a long article about the generation under thirty. "These young men and women are confident, ambitious, and

smart," said the article's author. "Seldom have the personal attitudes of a graduating class meshed so neatly with the needs of business."

And, in fact, the findings of these authors and magazines were supported by the numbers. Studies of college-course enrollment showed a [illegible] major, which dou[illegible] of all degrees granted in [illegible] UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute, which polls the attitudes of the nation's incoming freshmen, reported a similar change in attitudes. Our generation became more career-conscious and money-oriented with each year. In 1966, 84 percent of all incoming freshmen had reported that "Developing a Meaningful Philosophy of Life" was their most important goal; only 44 percent felt that "Being Very Well-Off Financially" was most important. By 1990, the trend had reversed: 74 percent now felt that a "Meaningful Philosophy" was the most important life goal; 76 percent now answered that "Financial Success" was their primary aim. As Stuart Himmeltarb, then president of the polling firm College Track, explained in 1989, "These young people have bought into the process."

And then, more or less overnight, everything changed. In July 1990, *Time* published a [illegible] entitled "Proceeding With Caution," which reported that "while recruiters are trying to woo young workers, a generation is out planning its escape from the 9-to-5 [illegible]." Time's "paralyzed," as "shirkers." For the "puzzling twentysomething crowd," the magazine wrote, "second best seems [illegible]." *Fortune* went on to note that "the young work force is considered overly sensitive at best and lazy at worst."

And just like that, the "determined, career-minded" articles disappeared. In *The Wall Street Journal*, in the *New York Times*, in the *Chicago Tribune*, the generation was suddenly seen as disappointing and low-energy, as a group of people whose values were "different" and "less job-oriented" than those of previous generations. Even *Fortune*, which had run articles about "fierce" and "competitive" young people *twice* during the preceding five years, changed the slant of its coverage. Ignoring what it had reported a year earlier ("Seldom have the personal attitudes of a graduating class meshed so neatly with the needs of business"), *Fortune* now claimed [illegible] to make sacrifices" for the sake of employers. "Their attitude: Other [illegible] family, lifestyle, the pursuit [illegible] experience [illegible] more important rewards." The article of a year before—claiming that money and career concerns fueled the choices postgraduates were making—might just as well never have been printed.

Why did this sudden shift take place in 1990? Although there are undoubtedly a number of reasons—journalistic pack thinking, for one—its timing was hardly coincidental. The worst recession since 1982 started in July 1990, and its weight fell most crushingly on those in their twenties. Between May 1990 and May 1991, about 400,000 people over thirty lost their jobs. For young Americans, the toll was staggering: a million people

[Advertisement]
SMOKE GOT IN THEIR EYES



CIGARETTES MADE THEM HISTORY

The [illegible] California State Department of Health Services Tobacco Control Section, was scheduled to run in the June 1993 "Health and Fitness" issue of Essence *magazine. Shortly before going to press, the magazine decided to pull the ad because the magazine's publisher deemed it too "controversial." According to a 1991 article in the* Harvard Public Health Review *by Linda Villarosa, Essence's senior editor for [illegible] "If you're a tobacco company, you mean, then kissing off just cigarettes, it may mean alienating a conglomerate*

their jobs that year.

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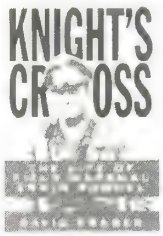
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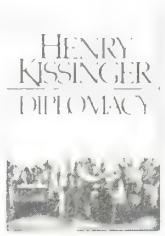
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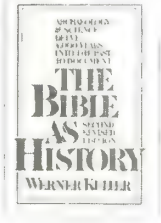
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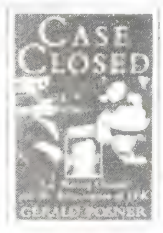
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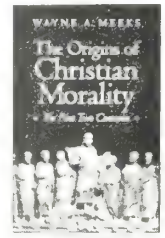
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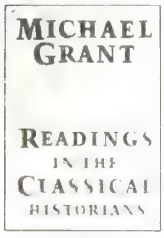
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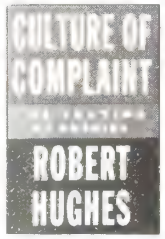
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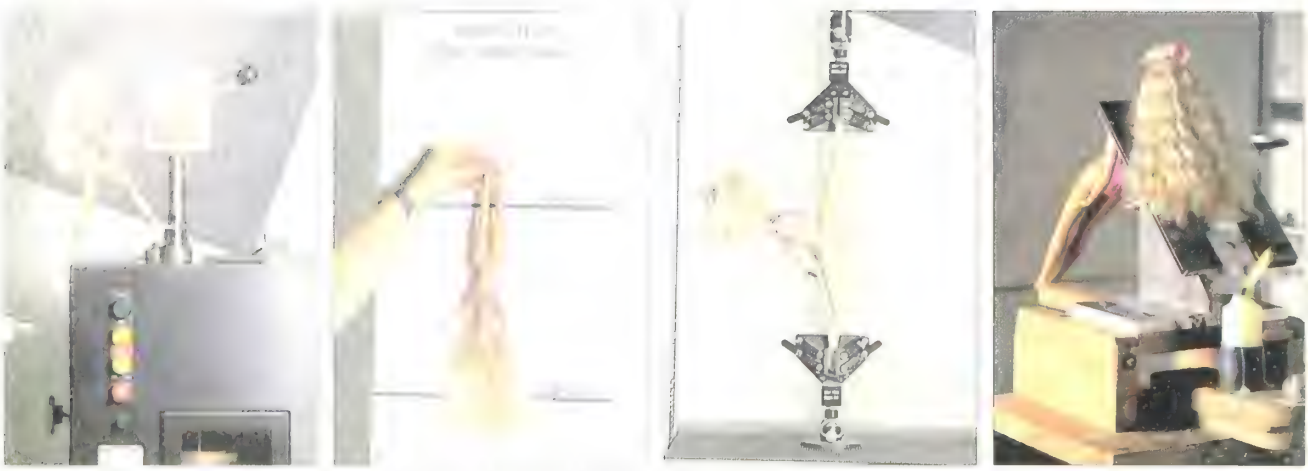
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at the lab put the dolls through a battery of tests. In the photos above, Barbie is undergoing, from left to right, the Bite Test, the Drop Test, the Leg Pull and Flammability. A selection of Schulman's Barbie photographs appeared in the December 1993 issue of Disney Adventures, *a monthly*

A LOOK THAT'S TO DIE FOR

D

After spending the money on a decent base,

unfortunately just as common is the tendency to overpowder and to end one's pallor at the jawbone. Such mistakes are just inexcusably stupid. Don't make them.

2. On the subject of eyeliner, liquid is better, but if your hands shake, by all means use the most expensive pencil you can afford. Cheap pencils go on faint and will smudge after an hour. Do something original with your eye makeup: cobwebs or bat wings drawn across the cheek look silly on anyone over the age of fifteen. On those under fifteen, however, such adornments are sure to attract the lecherous attention of jaded Goths in their late twenties and early thirties who will probably give you free speed if you prove sufficiently pliable.

3. Find a shade of lipstick that not everyone else is wearing. Theatrical supply stores are the best for really deep shades of congealed-blood red. Apply it with a lip brush for a more precise and severe effect.

4. Strive for originality in your costume. For those doing vintage looks, realize that both the eighteenth century and the Victorian era have [illegible] better than anyone else or choose another time period. The Twenties, Thirties, and Forties are largely untapped by Goths and have great potential. One could dress as an emaciated, opium-addicted flapper from the Aleister Crowley set or pose as the Black Dahlia, a would-be actress from the For- [illegible] black and would wear only black clothing; her ghastly mutilation and murder remain unsolved

to this day. Also remember that black is not the only color. Deep blues, grays, and greens, as well as blood-red, purple, and ivory, can be equally striking.

5. If you have scars on your wrists from suicide attempts, by all means display them proudly. The same goes for bruises, cuts, and track marks. Abscesses, however, should always be coyly veiled in filmy black fabric.

Your Gothic look should be as opulent, decadent, and original as possible. If you're not up to making the necessary effort to carry off this most high-maintenance of affectations, try wearing plaid shirts and listening to Nirvana instead.

[Questionnaire]

LET'S MEET OUR CONTESTANTS

From a collection of personal statements by contestants in the 1993 Miss Teen U.S.A. contest, held last spring in Biloxi, Mississippi. The statements were part of the press material distributed to reporters covering the pageant; the excerpts below appeared in a column by Marc Smirnoff in the Winter 1994 Oxford American. *Smirnoff is the editor of the quarterly.*

Do you have any famous relatives or ancestors?

Miss Arkansas: "Charles Dickens, the author."

Miss Georgia: "My great-uncle was Al Capone's chauffeur."

Miss Kansas: "My third cousin Ted Nuce is a famous bull rider."

Miss Tennessee: "My mother is Barbara Mandrell and two of my aunts are Irlene and Louise Mandrell."

What is your favorite health, beauty, or fitness tip or routine?

Miss South Dakota: "I enjoy doing the *Buns of Steel* video."

Miss Colorado: "I separate my eyelashes with a safety pin."

Miss Georgia: "Don't hoot with the owls at night if you can't crow with the rooster in the morning."

Miss Pennsylvania: "Don't compare yourself to other girls."

The word that best describes you is:

Miss Mississippi: "motormouth"

Miss Nebraska: "spicy"

Miss West Virginia: "bubbly"

Miss Florida: "erudite"

Miss Kansas: "mom"

Miss Texas: "determined"

List the most unusual things about yourself or unusual things you have done.

Miss Indiana: "My friend and I were robbed at gunpoint in the parking lot of a restaurant."

Miss Iowa: "My mom and I drove through our family room when the gas pedal stuck as she pulled into our garage."

Miss Michigan: "I have beauty marks that form the little dipper on my stomach."

Miss Mississippi: "I have never had braces; I have my own cattle; I collect spoons."

Miss Nebraska: "I have been successful in cheerleading competitions."

Miss Utah: "I play the piano with my toes."

Miss Virginia: "I'm a tall person."

Miss Colorado: "I'm a champion burper; I ride goats bareback."

Miss Rhode Island: "I was a golf-course food vendor for two days."

Miss Illinois: "I've wanted to be successful for as long as I can remember."

Miss Kansas: "I took a shower with my clothes on."

[Map]

THE BOUNDARIES OF TASTE



From Southern Cuisines: The Making of a Landscape, *by Charles P. Kovacik and John F. Winberry, published by the University of South Carolina Press in Columbia. Kovacik and Winberry note that "Carolina barbecue is [illegible] ded. There are, however, variations in the way the pork [illegible] above divides the state according to the kind of barbecue [illegible]*

SCHRODINGER'S SURFBOARD

D

But I am convinced, as are most surfers, that

quantum mechanics. Should the subatomic world

realized at the turn of this century that light waves sometimes behave like particles. Thirty years later another physicist, Louis de Broglie, alternately reasoned that electrons, always thought

But it was Erwin Schrodinger, an Austrian, who eventually won the hearts of surfers everywhere

at the equation that accu-

Is, the theoretical

travel from Alpha

billiard balls, al-

like lumbering beasts. They are the Schrodinger equation writ large—abstract mechanical principles magnified from the subatomic to a scale even the Beach Boys could grasp. While sound waves travel at about 760 miles per hour and light waves at 186,000 miles per *second*, surfable ocean waves move a little faster than the average person can run.

With sound and light waves, we detect only a by-product of their oscillations. In the case of sound, a barrage of waves beats against your eardrum; your eardrum activates your auditory nerve; your auditory nerve sends a signal to your brain; your brain tells you to dance. Out in the surf, no such translation is needed. You can feel each undulation, each pulse of energy, as it moves through the universe.

With a little practice, you can ride it.

THE SCIENTIST'S URGE FOR INTEGERS

Adapted from "Measures of Life," by Robert M. Sapolsky, in the March/April issue of The Sciences, *published by the New York Academy of Sciences. Sapolsky is an associate professor of biological sciences and neuroscience at Stanford University.*

The days of the electric chair are almost over; the method of choice among modern executioners is the lethal-injection machine. The cosmetic benefits of this $30,000 contraption are obvious—no smoke, no sudden jolts, no unpleasant smell. But the real reason for the machine's growing popularity, one suspects, is not its effect on the prisoner but its effect on the executioner. The machine, as stipulated by law in some states, is outfitted with dual sets of syringes and dual stations, with switches for two people to throw at the same time. A computer with a binary-number generator randomizes which sy-

erases the decision. No one will ever know who really killed the prisoner—not even the computer.

Such rites of execution are part of a subtle cognitive game. When a member of the two-man lethal-injection team goes home on the night of the execution, he does not think, "I am a murderer," or "Today I contributed to a murder." More likely, he will try to frame the issue in terms of statistical innocence; as half the team, he can imagine that he has been responsible for only half of the act. Or, more concretely, he might conclude: "I have a 50 percent chance of



From a series of insect photographs by Dan Winters in American Photography 9, *an annual showcase of creative photography published by Soft Interrnational. The insects pictured above are, from left to right, a cottonseed borer, a tropical [illegible]. The photographs first appeared in* Texas Monthly

not having helped kill someone today."

Two psychologists, Amos N. Tversky, of Stanford University, and Daniel Kahneman, of the University of California at Berkeley, have studied the consistent cognitive distortions we make when trying to understand causality. Their findings suggest that when a person takes part in a bad or destructive act, like an execution, he thinks fractionally—or, statistically speaking, in terms of "distributed tendencies"—distributing the guilt among those involved. Or, if he is the only actor, he minimizes the damaging consequences of the act by distributing them among a number of victims. Take, for example, an archetypically villainous industrialist, bloated and venal, who contemplates a new profitable venture for his factory. His minions of advisers, on the basis of their calculations, tell him that the pollution his factory will dump into the drinking water will probably lead to three cancer deaths in his town of 100,000. Naturally, he decides to go ahead with his remunerative plans. But that night he surely doesn't think in integers: "Today, for profit, I have consigned three innocents to their deaths." Instead, all his cognitive biases lead him to frame the matter in terms of statistical guilt: "All it does is increase the cancer risk .003 percent for each person. Trivial. Charles, you may serve me my dinner."

Just as we tend to perceive our less noble acts in terms of statistics and fractions and possibilities, when we do something good, the pull is toward integers—concrete examples, human faces. As a scientist, I feel this aspect of Tversky and Kahneman's work tugging most strenuously at my emotions. Consider one of their scenarios:

> In a population, all the deaths are attributable to two diseases, each accounting for half the deaths. You have a choice. You can discover something that cures all the known cases of one disease. Or you can discover something that cures half the cases of each disease.

These choices are formally equivalent and can be stated mathematically: 1 x 1/2 is equal to (1/2 x 1/2) + (1/2 x 1/2). Yet people show a strong bias toward curing all the cases of one disease. It closes the books on that disease, enables one category of illness to be entirely eliminated, satisfying our need for a sense of closure. In spite of our poetry and dreams, our cognitive pull is toward being concrete. As a scientist, I feel caught in this tug of war between the tangible and the intangible.

In 1977 a group of biomedical scientists from the World Health Organization inoculated the populace of a town called Merca, in the hinterlands of Somalia, and thereby accomplished something extraordinary: they eradicated the last known case of smallpox on this planet. I think of that moment often, and always with the envy of knowing I will never accomplish something like that.

When I was a postdoctoral fellow at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, I would occasionally see Jonas Salk at seminars and feel a sense of awe for a scientist who [illegible] was an extraordinary closure. I will never achieve that sense of closure, not just because I am not as skillful a biomedical scientist but also because of the way science is typically done these days. The scientific arena is now one in which a coherent picture of a problem emerges from the work of teams of people in dozens of laboratories, in which diseases often have multiple causes, in which biological messengers have multiple effects, in which a long meandering path of basic research might eventually lead to clinical trials. The chances that one person can single-hand-



F

to pour radiation down a sink or to kill animals, that calls on us to work so hard that the rest of our selves wither. We must battle distributed villains, charge them with statistical guilt, do the groundwork that will lead to minute fractional victories somewhere down the line. Such is the nature of our progress. But I wish the demands of our profession were not so at odds with our fundamental cognitive bias. I wish they were not so at odds with the desire to see the face of someone we helped.

[Essay]

FLUSH WITH WONDER

From "In Praise of Shadows," by Junichiro Tanizaki, in The Art of the Personal Essay, *an anthology edited by Phillip Lopate and published by Anchor Books. The essay, translated by Thomas J. Harper and Edward G. Seidensticker, first appeared in English as the title essay in a collection of Tanizaki's work published by Leete's Island Books. Tanizaki, a Japanese novelist, died in 1965; "In Praise of Shadows" was written in 1933.*

Every time I am shown to an old, dimly lit, and, I would add, impeccably clean toilet in a Nara or Kyoto temple, I am impressed with the singular virtues of Japanese architecture. The parlor may have its charms, but the Japanese toilet truly is a place of spiritual repose. It always stands apart from the main building, at the end of a corridor, in a grove fragrant with leaves and moss. No words can describe the sensation as one sits in the dim light, basking in the faint glow reflected from the shoji, lost in meditation or gazing out at the garden. The novelist Natsume Soseki counted his morning trips to the toilet a great pleasure, "a physiological delight," he called it. And surely there could be no better place to savor this pleasure than a Japanese toilet where, surrounded by tranquil walls and finely grained wood, one looks out upon blue skies and green leaves.

As I have said, there are certain prerequisites: a degree of dimness, absolute cleanliness, and quiet so complete one can hear the hum of a mosquito. I love to listen from such a toilet to the sound of softly falling rain, especially if it is a toilet of the Kanto region, with its long, narrow windows at floor level; there one can listen with such a sense of intimacy to the raindrops falling from the eaves and the trees, seeping into the earth as they wash over the base of a stone lantern and freshen the moss about the stepping stones. And the toilet is the perfect place to listen to the chirping of insects or the song of the birds, to view the moon, or to enjoy any of those poignant moments that mark the change of the seasons. Here, I suspect, is where haiku poets over the ages have come by a great many of their ideas. Indeed, one could with some justice claim that of all the elements of Japanese architecture, the toilet is the most aesthetic. Our forebears, making poetry of everything in their lives, transformed what by rights should be the most unsanitary room in the house into a place of unsurpassed elegance, replete with fond associations with the beauties of nature. Compared with Westerners, who regard the toilet as utterly unclean and avoid even the mention of it in polite conversation, we are far more sensible and certainly display better taste.

[Story]

PRACTICE

By Cindy Dach. From the October 1993 issue of The New Censorship, *a monthly literary magazine published in Denver, where Dach lives.*

In the front seat of the blue Dodge the driver caressing my breast. Billy Spark in the backseat telling Liola how he had done it with me. Done it with me out at the Dunes last week. We were hitching a ride to the concert on the hill by the band that we loved. The band we loved so much, that we'd do anything for, we all swore. The driver, his hand stroking my hair, one hand on the wheel, both eyes watching the plains disappear. Liola screamed, "I hate you. I hate you Billy Spark and she is a slut, how could you do it with her?" "It was practice, practice for you," he said. I watched them in the rearview mirror—Billy Spark moving his lips along her neck, whispering, "I'm sorry, so sorry, it was just practice for you." And last week it was my neck his lips were whispering against, saying, "I love them as much as you." And Billy had these tickets down in the front and I wanted to be so close. But now the driver, his hand moving down my dress, pulling it up over my knees, and he said, "Are you? Are you really ready for the band?" I said, "I love them so much you wouldn't understand." And he was reaching his hand between my legs, saying, "I know what you mean . . . I love them too." And his other hand came off the wheel, his fingers in my mouth, his eyes no longer watching the plains disappear, and it was practice, I said, practice for the band.

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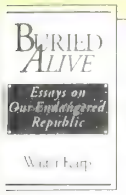
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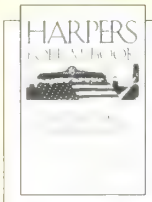
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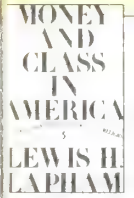
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The Greatest Ever Bank Robbery	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible] Acrostic Puzzle Book	9.00
[illegible] Cryptic Puzzle Book	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
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[illegible]	7.00
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Second Front	[illegible]
[illegible]	18.00
[illegible]	12.00
Typical	9.00
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	5.00
The World War Two Era	[illegible]

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Add applicable sales tax for delivery in New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Texas, California, Michigan, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Colorado, Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Minnesota, North Carolina, and the District of Columbia

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[Poem]

MY WORLD RECORD

From "Codeine Diary," by Tom Andrews, in The Hemophiliac's Motorcycle, *a collection of Andrews's poems, published by the University of Iowa Press, that was awarded the Iowa Poetry Prize.*

On November 15, 1972, [illegible] after [illegible] I clapped my hands for fourteen hours and thirty-one minutes. I was listed in *The Guinness Book of World Records*. I was eleven years old.

My record was published on page 449 of the 1974 edition of the *Guinness Book*, landlocked between the listings for "Largest Circus" and [illegible] in the chapter entitled "Human Achievements":

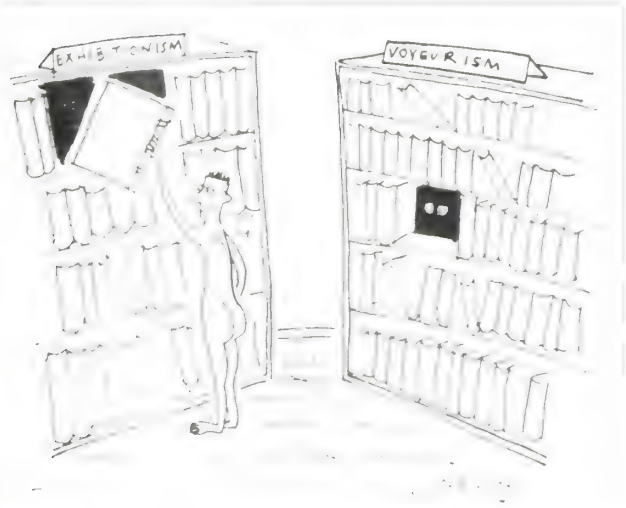
> *Clapping.* The duration record for continuous clapping is 14 hours 31 minutes by Thomas C. Andrews (b. April 30, 1961) at Charleston, West Virginia, on November 15, 1972. He sustained an average of 120 claps per minute and an audibility range of at least 100 yards.

•

I'm writing this from my bed at the University of Michigan Hospital. It is 3 A.M. It is the half-dark of hospitals at night. I have had an accident. I have been in an accident.

From my window I can make out the iced-over Huron River and a tennis court covered with a taut white sheet of snow.

•



From *The Spectator*

Philadelphia Inquirer
November 28, 1972
CHAMPIONS' ROUTES TO GLORY

. . . And sometimes champions have highly developed imaginations that help them in their quest for glory. Tom Andrews, only 11, of Charleston, W.Va., applauded without interruption for 14 hours 31 minutes. His father, Ray, so attested in an affidavit he sent to *The Guinness Book of World Records*.

Dear Tom,

It was certainly nice to read that you have broken the world's record in clapping. Keep your Dad busy getting that affidavit recorded.

We used to enjoy seeing how your Dad recorded you and John in your annual picture for Christmas. The last few years we had lost contact.

Congratulations again. Everyone is very proud of you.

Sincerely,
The Ripley Fishers

Dear Tom,

Try to come out if you can, but if you can't that's o.k. I can play till about 4:00 or 5:00. I hope you come out. Will you walk with me today? Circle YES NO

I think you are the nicest boy over in Rolling Hills. I'm going to try to get you something.

Love, Diane

P.S. Write back if you want to. Don't let anybody else see this except Nan if you want to. Or Laura. I just showed Nan and Laura. Do you mind? Circle YES NO

Answer questions and give back, please.

•

"That your scrapbook?" Ellen, the night nurse, asks.

When I mutter that, technically, it's my mother's, who brought it to the hospital to cheer me up, Ellen glances at the *Inquirer* headline and says, "You did that? Clapped your hands?"

I nod.

"Lord!" she says. "Did you have a major bleed, or what?"

•

I have had an accident on the sidewalk. I watched my feet come out from under me on the iced concrete with a kind of anecdotal perspective. The bleeding inside the joints, the infusions of factor VIII, the weeks of immobility, the waiting for codeine, the inventions with which my mind would veer in the direction of solid ground— as my weight drilled into the twisting leg I saw the whole pantomime emerge with the clarity of blown glass.

•

When I told my hematologist that as a teenager I had raced motocross, that in fact in one race in Gallipolis, Ohio, I had gotten the holeshot and





hore Road, Magnolia, Mass., 1989 *(left)* and Banana Peel Pie, 1990 *(right)*, by Philemona Williams. From a series of Williams' paintings in the Spring issue of The Gettysburg Review, published by Gettysburg College, in Pennsylvania. Williams lives in New York City.

was bumped in the first turn and run over by twenty-some motorcycles, she said, "No. Not with your factor level. I'm sorry, but you wouldn't withstand the head injuries. You like the sound of yourself being dramatic."

•

There are times, in the last minutes before I am allowed, or allow myself, more codeine, when the pain inside the joints simplifies me utterly. I feel myself descending some kind of evolutionary ladder until I become as crude and guileless as an amoeba. The pain is not personal. I am incidental to it. It is like faith, the believer eclipsed by something immense . . .

•

You like the sound of yourself being dramatic.

•

"Does he have to do that?" the waitress at Pizza Hut asked. She passed out glasses of ice water from a tray, then set the tray down on the table.

"He's breaking a world record," John said flatly.

"Does it bother you?" my mother said. "I can't make him stop, but we can leave."

The waitress looked up. "You're joking, right? Let me see." She gestured for me to pull my hands out from under the table.

I showed my hands. Eyes, hostile, were staring from neighboring booths and tables.

"He has to sustain an audibility range of at least one hundred yards," John said.

"I'm getting the cook," she said. "He's got to see this."

A minute later a thin man with botched teeth, wearing a blue dough-smeared apron, was glaring at me. "Well," he said impatiently, "let's see your deal."

Again I showed my hands. I speeded up, just a little, the rate of clapping.

"Right. Unbelievable," the cook said, shaking his head and disappearing. I said, "Can we order?"

"What do you do if you have to go to the bathroom?" the waitress asked.

"I'd like a root beer," I said. "Do you have root beer?"

"He's trying to go the whole day without going," my mother said.

"Good luck!" the waitress said.

I said, "Do you have root beer?"

"Yeah, they have root beer," John said.

I said, "I was asking her, thank you very much."

"I don't think I could go the whole day," the waitress said. "I think I have a weak bladder."

I leaned over to John and whispered: "*Help.*"

"Hey," said the waitress, "how are you going to eat pizza?"

"I'm not," I said. "I'm just sipping some root beer. If you have it."

"They have it, they have it," John said.

John buried his head in his hands.

"I'm going to feed him," my mother said.

"No way," I said.

For a second I forgot to clap, then caught myself and reestablished my rhythm.

"We'll have a large mushroom and pepperoni," my mother said. "And I'd like a glass of iced tea. What do you want to drink?"

"I want a Coke," John said.

"Root beer," I said.

•

Night. Snow falling past the window. It is codeine, breaking up and falling softly over the small field and train tracks, over the plowed roads, over the houses and apartment buildings, the river, the tall trees furred with ice.

•

After the waitress left, my mother lectured me about not participating in events we scheduled on John's "off-days"—days when he wasn't on the dialysis machine. "You've known for a week that we were coming here. You could have picked another day for this clapping business." She said this in front of John, who grimaced and began looking around the room.

My argument was that just being there at Pizza Hut, while I was in the crucial early hours of breaking a world record, was sufficient participation, and that sipping a little root beer, under the circumstances, put me solidly in the off-day spirit of things.

She didn't see it that way.

•

What surprised me was how easy it was to keep a precise and consistent rhythm. Two hours into the record, I felt as if my hands, like the legs of runners who have broken through the "wall," could hammer away at themselves effortlessly and indefinitely. At that point I knew I would not start a bleed. I had no doubt. And yet my hands kept hammering at themselves. Hammering.

•

"Nixon's problem is, he's not eating right," my mother said. "It's plain as day, anyone can see it. Just look at the man."

It was 5:30 P.M. and I was still at it, 120 claps per minute.

"Care for a drink?" my father said to himself. "Don't mind if I do, thank you for asking."

•

[illegible]

pressure, a packed-in rawness in my back, like a boot heel pressing down hard, but from inside. [illegible]

I'm pushing a hole through the buzzer to Ellen. [illegible] my thumb is nothing.

Hours in codeine's loose grip.

•

For a long time I asked John to come watch me race. Again and again he refused. Finally he agreed to come to a race at Hidden Hills Raceway in Gallipolis, Ohio—to shut me up, I think, as much as to satisfy his curiosity about his hemophiliac brother racing a motorcycle across the gouged wilderness.

I knew John would have to wear a plastic bag over his shunt arm to keep the dust out. We were lucky it rained. Dust usually billowed wildly after the start of a race, a huge rolling wave breaking over the hills and shrouding the spectators. Rain would keep the dirt moist and on the track.

Midway through the practice sessions, however, the rain stopped. By the time of the first 125 moto, dust forced John into the cab of the pickup.

That is the image that attacks me now. John in the truck, windows rolled up, reading a book to pass the time while I kicked up the dust all around him.

•

"You have to imagine Richard Nixon as a little boy," my mother said. "A boy with a mother and a father, just like everybody else."

Now I tried to muffle the sound of my clapping.

"It's not that simple," my father said, "and you know it."

•

Random symmetries . . . Days when John's shunt clotted and he required I forget how many cc's of heparin to get his blood to stop coagulating.

Meanwhile, I'd start a bleed, and would need cryoprecipitate or factor VIII to get my blood to clot . . .

•

More X rays. I've stopped bleeding into the spinal muscles. Soon enough, my hematologist says, my body will loosen and break down and absorb the hardened blood surrounding the spine, as it has been doing in my leg. There has been no intraspinal bleeding, no bleeding into the kidney or liver.

I look at Carrie. I look at my mother and father. We are inside a sudden astonishing calm. I seem to levitate and hover over the white sheets . . .

•

Once when John was dialyzing I tripped into the machine and jerked a tube clean out of its socket. John's blood pumped and sprayed into the air, splattering across the carpet and splotching our skin and clothes. My mother worked frantically to reconnect the tube and to stabilize John's blood pressure.

Later I noticed that some of the blood had seeped inside a picture frame on the wall beside the dialysis chair. The frame held a photograph of John and me wading in the Kanawha River, staring hard at the gray water. ■

TICKET TO THE FAIR

Wherein our reporter gorges himself on corn dogs, gapes at terrifying rides, acquaints himself with the odor of pigs, exchanges unpleasantries with tattooed carnies, and admires the loveliness of cows

BY DAVID FOSTER WALLACE

AUGUST 5, 1993. INTERSTATE 55. WESTBOUND. 8:00 A.M.

Today is Press Day at the Illinois State Fair in Springfield, nd I'm supposed to be at the fairrounds by 9:00 A.M. to get my creentials. I imagine credentials to e a small white card in the band of fedora. I've never been considred press before. My real interest in redentials is getting into rides and nows for free. I'm fresh in from the ast Coast, for an East Coast magzine. Why exactly they're interested in the Illinois State Fair remains unclear to ne. I suspect that every so often editors at East Coast magazines slap their foreheads and remember that about 90 percent of the United States lies between the coasts, and figure they'll engage somebody to do pith-helmeted anthropological reporting on something rural and heartlandish. I think they asked me to do this because I grew up here, just a couple hours' drive from downstate Springfield. I never did go to the state fair, though—I pretty much topped out at the county-fair level. Actually, I haven't been back to Illinois for a long time, and can't say I've missed it.



The heat is all too familiar. In August it takes hours for the dawn fog to burn off. The air is like wet wool. Eight A.M. is too early to justify turn-

David Foster Wallace is the author of The Broom of the System, *a novel, and* Girl With Curious Hair, *a collection of short stories. A new novel,* Infinite Jest, *will be published by Little, Brown next year. His last contribution to* Harper's Magazine, *"The Awakening of My Interest in Annular Systems," a story, appeared in the September 1993 issue.*

Photograph courtesy of the Illinois State Fair

No anthropologist worth his pith helmet would be without the shrewd counsel of a colorful local, and I've lured a Native Companion here with the promise of free admission and unlimited corn dogs.

ing on the car's AC. The sun is a blotch in a sky that isn't so much cloudy as opaque. The corn starts just past the breakdown lanes and goes right to the sky's hem. August corn in Illinois is as tall as a tall man. With all the advances in fertilization, it's now knee-high by June 1. Locusts chirr in every field, a brassy electric sound that Dopplers oddly inside the speeding car. Corn, corn, soybeans, corn, exit ramp, corn, and every few miles an outpost way off on a reach in the distance—house, tree with tire swing, barn, satellite dish. Grain silos are the only skyline. A fog hangs just over the fields. It is over eighty degrees and climbing with the sun. It'll be over ninety degrees by 10:00 A.M. There's that tightening quality to the air, like it's drawing itself in and down for a siege. The interstate is dull and pale. Occasional other cars look ghostly, their drivers' faces humidity-stunned.

9:00 A.M.

It's still a week before the fair, and there's something surreal about the emptiness of parking facilities so huge and complex that they have their own map. The parts of the fairgrounds that I can see are half-permanent structures and half tents and displays in various stages of erection, giving the whole thing the look of somebody half-dressed for a really important date.

9:05 A.M.

The man processing print-press credentials has a mustache and short-sleeve knit shirt. In line before me are newshounds from *Today's Agriculture*, the *Decatur Herald & Review*, *Illinois Crafts Newsletter*, *4-H News*, and *Livestock Weekly*. Credentials are just a laminated mug shot with a gator clip for your pocket. Not a fedora in the house. Two older ladies behind me from a local horticulture organ engage me in shoptalk. One lady is the unofficial historian of the Illinois State Fair: she gives slide shows on the fair at nursing homes and Rotary lunches. She begins to emit historical data at a great rate—the fair started in 1853; there was a fair during the Civil War but not during WWII, and not in 1893, because Chicago was hosting the World's Columbian Exposition; the governor has failed to cut the ribbon personally on opening day only twice; etc. It occurs to me that I ought to have brought a notebook.

I'm also the only person in the room in a T-shir It is a fluorescent-lit cafeteria in something calle the Illinois Building Senior Center, uncoole The local TV crews have their equipment sprea out on tables and are lounging against walls. The all have mustaches and short-sleeve knit shirt In fact, the only other males in the room withou mustaches and golf shirts are the local TV re porters, four of them, all in suits. They are sleek sweatless, deeply blue-eyed. They stand togeth er up by the dais, which has a podium and a fla and a banner reading "Give Us a Whirl"—thi year's theme. Middle-management types ente A squelch of feedback on a loudspeaker brings th official Press Welcome & Briefing to order. It dull. The words "excited," "proud," and "oppor tunity" are used repeatedly. Ms. Illinois Count Fairs, tiara bolted to the tallest coiffure I've eve seen (bun atop bun, multiple layers, a ziggurat hair), is proudly excited to have the opportuni ty to present two corporate guys, sweating freel in suits, who report the excited pride of Mc Donald's and Wal-Mart to have the opportunit to be this year's corporate sponsors.

9:50 A.M.

Under way at 4 mph on the Press Tour, o a kind of flatboat with wheels and lengthwise bench so queerly high that every body's feet dangle. The tractor pulling us ha signs that say "ethanol" and "agripowered." I'r particularly keen to see the carnies setting up th rides in the fairgrounds' "Happy Hollow," but w head first to the corporate and political tents Most every tent is still setting up. Workmen craw over structural frames. We wave at them; the wave back; it's absurd: we're only going 4 mpl One tent says "Corn: Touching Our Lives Ever Day." There are massive many-hued tents cou tesy of McDonald's, Miller Genuine Draft, Mo ton Commercial Structures Corp., the Land c Lincoln Soybean Association ("Look Where Soy beans Go!"), Pekin Energy Corp. ("Proud of Ou Sophisticated Computer-Controlled Processin Technology"), Illinois Pork Producers, the Joh Birch Society. Two tents that say "Republican and "Democrat." Other, smaller tents for vari ous Illinois officeholders. It is well up in th nineties and the sky is the color of old jeans.

We go over a system of crests to Farm Expo— twelve acres of wicked-looking needle-toothe

rrows, tractors, seeders, harvesters. Then back
ound the rear of the big permanent Artisans'
ilding, Illinois Building Senior Center, Expo
w, where half-assembled rides stand in giant
s and rays and shirtless guys with tattoos and
enches slouch around them, fairly oozing men-
e and human interest, but on at a crawl up a
icktop path to the livestock buildings. By this
ne, most of the press is off the tram and walk-
g in order to escape the tour's PA speaker, which
inny and brutal. Horse Complex. Cattle Com-
ex. Swine Barn. Sheep Barn. Poultry Building
d Goat Barn. These
e all long brick bar-
cks open down both
les of their length.
me contain stalls;
ners have pens divid-
into squares with alu-
inum rails. Inside,
ey're gray cement, dim
d yeasty, huge fans
erhead, workers in
eralls and waders hos-
g everything down.
animals yet, but the
ells still hang from
t year—horses' odors
arp, cows' rich, sheep's
ly, swine's unspeak-
le. No idea what the
ultry Building smelled
e, because I couldn't bring myself to go in. Trau-
atically pecked once, as a child, at the Cham-
ign County Fair, I have a long-standing phobic
ing about poultry.



The ethanol tractor's exhaust is literally flatu-
nt-smelling as we crawl out past the Grand-
and, where later there will be evening concerts
d harness and auto racing—"World's Fastest
ne-Mile Dirt Track"—and head for something
lled the Help Me Grow tent, to interface with
e state's First Lady, Brenda Edgar. The first sign
the Help Me Grow area is the nauseous bright
l of Ronald McDonald's hair. He's capering
ound a small plastic playground area under can-
stripe tenting. Though the fair is ostensibly
osed, troupes of kids mysteriously appear and
gage in rather rehearsed-looking play as we ap-
oach. Two of the kids are black, the first black
ople I've seen anywhere on the grounds. No
rents in view. The governor's wife stands sur-
nded by flinty-eyed aides. Ronald pretends to
l down. The press forms into a ring. There are
veral state troopers in khaki and tan, streaming
eat under their Nelson Eddy hats. Mrs. Edgar is
ol and groomed and pretty in a lacquered way.
e's of the female age that's always suffixed with
sh." Her tragic flaw is her voice, which sounds
almost heliated. The Help Me Grow program,
when you decoct the rhetoric, is basically a
statewide crisis line for over-the-edge parents to
call and get talked out of beating up their kids. The
number of calls Mrs. Edgar says the line has field-
ed just this year is both de- and impressive. Shiny
pamphlets are distributed. Ronald McDonald,
voice slurry and makeup cottage-cheesish in the
heat, cues the kids to come over for some low-rent
sleight of hand and Socratic banter. Lacking a
way to the back, and my view is obscured by the
towering hair of Ms. Illinois County Fairs, whose
function here is unclear.
I don't want to asperse,
but Ronald McDonald
the influence of some-
thing more than fresh
country air. I drift away
under the tent. All the
toys and plastic play
ground equipment have
signs that say "Courtesy
of" and then a corpo-
rate name. A lot of the
photographers in the
ring have dusty green
safari vests, and they sit
cross-legged in the sun,
getting low-angle shots
of Mrs. Edgar. There are
no tough questions from
the media. The tram's tractor is putting out a
steady sweatsock shape of blue-green exhaust. I no-
tice that the grass under the Help Me Grow tent
is different—pine-green and prickly-looking. Sol-
id investigative bent-over journalism reveals that
it is artificial. A huge mat of plastic artificial grass
has been spread over the knoll's real grass, under
the tent. I have my first moment of complete East
Coast cynicism: a quick look under the edge of the
fake-grass mat reveals the real grass underneath,
flattened and already yellowing.

Official opening. Ceremony, introduc-
tions, verbiage. Big brass shears, for cut-
ting the ribbon across the main gate. It is
cloudless and dry, but forehead-tightening ly hot.
Noon will be a kiln. No anthropologist worth his
pith helmet would be without the shrewd coun-
sel of a colorful local, and I've lured a Native
Companion here for the day with the promise of
free admission, unlimited corn dogs, and various
shiny trinkets. Knit-shirt press and rabid early fair-
goers are massed from the gate all the way out to
Springfield's Sangamon Avenue, where home-
owners with plastic flags invite you to park on

Rural Midwesterners live surrounded by unpopulated land, marooned in a space whose emptiness is both physical and spiritual. Here the land is not an environment but a commodity

their front lawn for five dollars. We stand near the back. I gather that "Little Jim" Edgar, the governor, isn't much respected by the press. Governor Edgar is maybe fifty and greyhound-thin, with steel glasses and hair that looks carved out of feldspar. He radiates sincerity, though. After the hacks introduce him, he speaks sanely and, I think, well. He invites everybody to get in there and have a really good time and to revel in watching everybody else also having a good time—a kind of reflexive exercise in civics. The press corps seems unmoved.

But this fair, the idea and now the reality of it, does seem to have something uniquely to do with state-as-community, a grand-scale togetherness. And it is not just the claustrophobic mash of people waiting to get inside. The fair occupies space, and there's no shortage of empty space in downstate Illinois. The fairgrounds take up 300-plus acres on the north side of Springfield, a depressed capital of 109,000 where you can't spit without hitting a Lincoln-site plaque. The fair spreads itself out, and visually so. The main gate is on a rise, and through the two sagged halves of ribbon you get a specular vantage on the whole thing—virgin and sun-glittered, even the tents looking freshly painted. It seems garish and endless and aggressively special. Kids are having little epileptic fits all aroûnd us, frenzied with a need to take in everything at once. I suspect that part of the self-conscious community thing here has to do with space. Rural Midwesterners live surrounded by unpopulated land, marooned in a space whose emptiness is both physical and spiritual. It is not just people you get lonely for. You're alienated from the very space around you, for here the land is not an environment but a commodity. The land is basically a factory. You live in the same factory you work in. You spend an enormous amount of time with the land, but you're still alienated from it in some way. I theorize to Native Companion (who worked detasseling summer corn with me in high school) that the state fair's animating thesis involves some kind of structured, decorated interval of communion with both neighbor and space—the sheer *fact* of the land is to be celebrated here, its yields ogled and its stock groomed and paraded. A special vacation from alienation, a chance, for a moment, to love what real life out here can't let you love. Native Companion gives me a look, then rummages for her cigarette lighter, quite a bit more interested in that.

10:40 A M

The livestock venues are at full occupanc animalwise, but we seem to be the on fairgoing tourists from the ceremony who'v dashed right over to tour them. You can tell whic barns are for which animals with your eyes close The horses are in their own individual stalls, wit half-height doors and owners and grooms c stools by the doors, a lot of them dozing. Th horses stand in hay. Billy Ray Cyrus plays loud on some stableboy's boom box. The horses ha tight hides and apple-sized eyes that are set on th sides of their heads, like fish. I've rarely been th close to fine livestock. The horses' faces are lon and somehow suggestive of coffins. The race are lanky, velvet over bone. The draft and sho horses are mammoth and spotlessly groomed, an more or less odorless: the acrid smell in here is ju the horses' pee. All their muscles are beautiful; th hides enhance them. They make farty nois when they sigh, heads hanging over the sho doors. They're not for petting, though. Whe you come close they flatten their ears and sho big teeth. The grooms laugh to themselves as y jump back. These are special competitive horse with intricately bred high-strung artistic ten peraments. I wish I'd brought carrots. Animals ca be bought, emotionally. Stall after stall horses. Standard horse-type colors. They eat th same hay they stand in. Occasional feedbags loo like gas masks. A sudden clattering spray-sour like somebody hosing down siding turns out to l a glossy dun stallion peeing. He's at the back his stall getting combed, and the door is wi open. The stream of pee is an inch in diameter an throws up dust and hay and it looks like eve chips of wood from the floor. A stallion is a ma horse. We hunker down and have a look upwar and suddenly for the first time I understand certain expression describing certain huma males, an expression I'd heard but never qui understood till now.

You can hear the cows all the way from th Horse Complex. The cow stalls are all doorle and open to view. I don't guess a cow preser much of an escape risk. They are white-spotted du or black, or else white with big continents of du or black. They have no lips and their tongues a

de. Their eyes roll and they have huge nostrils, ping and wet and pink or black. Cow manure ells wonderful—warm and herbal and blame-s—but cows themselves stink in a rich biotic way, ther like a wet boot. Some of the owners are rubbing down their entries for the upcoming ef show over at the Coliseum (so says my detailed edia guide). These cows stand immobilized in ebs of canvas straps inside a steel frame while -professionals scrub them down with a hose-id-brush thing that also oozes soap. The cows not like this one bit. One cow, whose face is eeri- reminiscent of Winston Churchill's, trembles id shudders and makes the frame clank, lowing, eyes rolling up almost to the whites. Native ompanion and I cringe and make soft appalled ises. The cow's lowing starts other cows low-g, or maybe they just see what they're in for. he cow's legs keep alf-buckling, and e owner kicks at em. White mucus ings from its snout. ther ominous drip-ngs and gushings m elsewhere. The w almost tips the me over, and the vner punches her the ribs.



Swine Barn. wine have fur! I ever thought of ine as having fur. 're actually never en up very close to swine, for olfactory reasons. lot of the swine in here are show hogs, a breed lled Poland China, their thin fur a kind of white ewcut over pink skin. A lot of the swine are own on their sides, stuporous and throbbing in e barn's heat. The awake ones grunt. They stand id lie on very clean large-curd sawdust in low-nced pens. A couple of barrows are eating both e sawdust and their own excrement. Again, 're the only tourists here. A bullhorn on a wall nounces that the Junior Pygmy Goat judging is der way over at the Goat Barn. A lot of these ine are frankly huge—say a third the size of a lkswagen. Every once in a while you hear about mers getting mauled or killed by swine. No eth in view here, though their hoofs are cloven d pink and obscene. I'm not sure whether they're lled hoofs or feet on swine. Rural Midwestern-s learn in second grade that there's no such word "hooves." Some of the swine have large fans owing in front of their pens, and twelve ceiling ns roar, but it is still hellish in here. Pig smell is th vomity and excremental, like some hideous gestive disorder on a grand scale. Maybe a olera ward would come close. The swineherds and owners have on rubber boots nothing like the L.L. Bean boots worn on the East Coast. Some of the standing swine commune through the bars of their pens, snouts almost touching. The sleeping swine thrash in dreams, their legs working. Unless they're in distress, swine grunt at a low constant pitch. It is a pleasant sound.

But now one butterscotch-colored swine is screaming. Distressed swine scream. The sound is both human and inhuman enough to make your hair stand. The professional swinemen ignore the pig, but we fuss on over, Native Companion making concerned baby-talk sounds until I shush her. The distressed pig's sides are heaving; it is sitting up with its front legs quivering, screaming horribly. This pig's keeper is nowhere in sight. A small sign on its pen says it is a Hampshire. It is having respiratory trouble, clearly: I'm guessing it inhaled either sawdust or excrement. Its front legs now buckle, so it is on its side, spasming. [illegible] get enough breath [illegible] of the ag-professionals comes vaulting over the pens to administer aid. Native Companion and I wring our hands with sympathy. We both make plangent little noises at the pig. Native Companion tells me to go get somebody instead of standing there with my thumb up my butt. I feel enormous stress—the nauseous smell, impotent sympathy, plus we're behind schedule. We are currently missing the Junior Pygmy Goats, Philatelic Judging at the Expo Building, a 4-H Dog Show at Club Mickey D's, the semifinals of the Midwest Arm-Wrestling Championships, a Ladies Camping Seminar, and the opening rounds of the Speed Casting Tournament. A swineherd kicks her Poland China sow awake so she can add more sawdust to its pen; Native Companion utters a pained sound. There are clearly only two animal-rights advocates in this Swine Barn. We both can observe a kind of sullen, callous expertise in the demeanor of the ag-pros. Prime example of spiritual-alienation-from-land-as-commodity, I posit. Except why take all the trouble to breed and care for and train a special animal and bring it to the Illinois State Fair if you don't care anything about it?

Then it occurs to me that I had bacon yesterday and am even now looking forward to my first corn dog of the fair. I'm standing here wringing

tograph from the *State Journal-Register*

Now the Zipper operator is making Native Companion's car spin around and around on its hinges. There is a distended scream from the whirling car, as if she is being slow-roasted inside

my hands over a distressed swine and then I'm going to go pound down a corn dog. This is connected to my reluctance to charge over to a swine pro and demand emergency resuscitative care for this agonized Hampshire. I can sort of picture the look the farmer would give me.

Not that it's profound, but I'm struck, amid the pig's screams and wheezes, by the fact that these agricultural pros do not see their stock as pets or friends. They are just in the agribusiness of weight and meat. They are unconnected, even at the fair's self-consciously special occasion of connection. And why not?—even at the fair their products continue to drool and smell and scream, and the work goes on. I can imagine what they think of us, cooing at the swine: we fairgoers don't have to deal with the business of breeding and feeding our meat; our meat simply materializes at the corn-dog stand, allowing us to separate our healthy appetites from fur and screams and rolling eyes. We tourists get to indulge our tender animal-rights feelings with our tummies full of bacon. I don't know how keen these sullen farmers' sense of irony is, but mine's been honed East Coast keen, and I feel like a bit of an ass in the Swine Barn.

11:50 A.M.

Since Native Companion was lured here for the day by the promise of free access to high-velocity rides, we make a quick descent into Happy Hollow. Most of the rides aren't even twirling hellishly yet. Guys with ratchet wrenches are still cranking away, assembling the Ring of Fire. The Giant Gondola Wheel is only half-built, and its seat-draped lower half resembles a hideous molary grin. It is over 100 degrees in the sun, easy.

Happy Hollow's dirt midway is flanked by carnival-game booths and ticket booths and rides. There's a merry-go-round and a couple of tame kiddie rides, but most of the rides look like genuine Near-Death Experiences. The Hollow seems to be open only technically, and the ticket booths are unmanned, though little heartbreaking jets of AC air are blowing out through the money slots in the booths' glass. Attendance is sparse, and I notice that none of the ag-pro or farm people are anywhere in sight down here. A lot of the carnies slouch and slump in the shade of awnings. Every one of them seems to chain-smoke. The Tilt-a-Whirl operator has got his boots up on his control panel reading a motorcycle-and-naked-gi magazine while guys attach enormous rubb hoses to the ride's guts. We sidle over for a cha The operator is twenty-four and from Bee Branch Arkansas, and has an earring and a huge tatto of a flaming skull on his triceps. He's far more ir terested in chatting with Native Companio than with me. He's been at this gig five year touring with this one here same company her Couldn't rightly say if he liked it or not. Broke i on the Toss-a-Quarter-Onto-the-Plates game an got, like, transferred over to the Tilt-a-Whirl '91. He smokes Marlboro 100's but wears a ca that says "Winston."

All the carny game barkers have headset m crophones; some are saying "Testing" and reci ing their pitch lines in tentative warm-up way A lot of the pitches seem frankly sexual: You g to get it up to get it in. Take it out and lay down, only a dollar. Make it stand up. Two do lars, five chances. Make it stand up. Rows stuffed animals hang by their feet in the booth like game put out to cure. It smells like machin grease and hair tonic down here, and there's a ready a spoiled, garbagy smell. The media gui says Happy Hollow is contracted to "one of th largest owners of amusement attractions in th country," one Blomsness-Thebault Enterprise of Crystal Lake, Illinois, near Chicago. But th carnies are all from the middle South—Ten nessee, Arkansas, Oklahoma. They are visibl unimpressed by the press credentials clipped to m shirt. They tend to look at Native Companion lik she's food, which she ignores. I lose four dolla trying to "get it up and in," tossing miniatu basketballs into angled baskets in such a way th they don't bounce out. The game's barker ca toss them behind his back and get them to sta but he's right up next to the baskets. My shots ca om out from eight feet away; the straw baske look soft, but their bottoms make a suspicio steely sound when hit.

It's so hot that we move in quick vectors b tween areas of shade. I'm reluctant to go shirtle because there'd be no way to display my crede trials. We zigzag gradually westward. One of the fi ly assembled rides near the Hollow's west end something called the Zipper. It's riderless as we a proach, but in furious motion, a kind of Fer wheel on amphetamines. Individual caged cars a hinged to spin on their own axes as they go arou in a tight vertical ellipse. The machine looks l

:e a Zipper than the head of a chain saw. It unds like a shimmying V-12 engine, and it is mething I'd run a mile in tight shoes to avoid ling.

Native Companion starts clapping and hop- ıg, though. The operator at the controls sees her d shouts down to git on over and git some; if e's a mind. He claims they want to test it some- ow. He's elbowing a colleague next to him in a ay I don't much care for. We have no tickets, I int out, and none of the cash-for-ticket booths e manned. "Ain't no sweat off my balls," the op- ator says without looking at me. The opera- r's colleague conducts Native Companion up e waffled-steel steps and straps her into a cage, ping a thumb at the operator, who pulls a lever. ıe starts to ascend. Pathetic little figers appear in the cage's mesh. ıe Zipper's operator is ageless and ırnt-brown and has a mustache axed to wicked points like a steer's rns, rolling a Drum cigarette with ıe hand as he nudges levers upward d the ellipse of cars speeds up and e individual cars themselves start to in on their hinges. Native Com- nion is a blur of color inside her ge, but operator and colleague hose jeans have worked down his ps to the point that the top of his tt-crack is visible) watch studiously Native Companion's spinning car d the clanking empty cars circle e ellipse once a second. I can bare- watch. The Zipper is the color of brushed teeth, with big scabs of st. The operator and colleague sit a little steel deck before a panel of ack-knobbed levers. The colleague its Skoal into a can he holds and tells the op- ator, "Well then take her up to eight then you ssy." The Zipper begins to whine and the thing spin so fast that a detached car would surely be rled into orbit. The colleague has a small Amer- ın flag folded into a bandanna around his head. ıe empty cars shudder and clank as they whirl d spin. One long scream, wobbled by changes vector, is coming from Native Companion's ge, which is going around and around on its ages while a shape inside tumbles like stuff in clothes dryer. My neurological makeup (ex- mely sensitive: carsick, airsick, heightsick) kes just watching this an act of great person- ourage. The scream goes on and on; it is noth- like a swine's. Then the operator stops the ride ruptly with her car at the top, so she's hanging side down inside the cage. I call up—is she ay? The response is a strange high-pitched ise. I see the two carnies gazing upward very in- tly, shading their eyes. The operator is stroking his mustache contemplatively. The cage's inversion has made Native Companion's dress fall up. They're ogling her nethers, obviously.

Now the operator is joggling the choke lever so the Zipper stutters back and forth, forward and backward, making Native Companion's top car spin around and around on its hinges. His colleague's T-shirt has a stoned Ninja Turtle on it, toking on a joint. There's a distended A-sharp scream from the whirling car, as if Native Companion is being slow-roasted. I summon saliva to step in and really say something stern, but at this point they start bringing her down. The operator is deft at his panel; the car's descent is almost fluffy. His hands on the levers are a kind of parody of tender care. The descent takes forever—ominous silence



from Native Companion's car. The two carnies are laughing and slapping their knees. [illegible] twice. Native Companion's car descends, stops. Jiggles of movement in the car. Then the [illegible] slowly turns. I expect whatever husk of a person emerges from the car to be hunched and sheet-white, dribbling fluids.

Instead she bounds out. "That was fucking *great*! Joo *see* that? Son of a bitch spun that car *sixteen times*, did you see?" This woman is native Midwestern, from my hometown. My prom date a dozen years ago. Her color is high. Her dress looks like the world's worst case of static cling. She's still got her *chewing gum* in, for God's sake. She turns to the carnies: "You sons bitches, that was fucking *great*." The colleague is half-draped over the operator; they're roaring with laughter. Native Companion has her hands on her hips, but she's grinning. Am I the only one who's in touch with the sexual-harassment element in this whole episode? She takes the steel stairs several at a

tograph from the [illegible]

time and starts up the hillside toward the food booths. Behind us the operator calls out, "They don't call me King of the Zipper for nuthin', sweet thang!"

She snorts and calls back over her shoulder,

I'm having a hard time keeping up. "Did you hear that?" I ask her.

"Jesus I thought I bought it for sure, that was so great. Assholes. But did you *see* that one spin up top at the end, though?"

"Did you hear that Zipper King comment?" I protest. She has her hand around my elbow and is helping me up the hillside's slick grass. "Did you sense something kind of sexual-harassmentish going on through that whole sick little exercise?"

"Oh for fuck's sake, it was fun—son of a bitch spun that car *sixteen times*."

"They were looking up your *dress*. You couldn't see them, maybe. They hung you upside down at a great height and made your dress fall up and ogled you. They shaded their eyes and commented to each other."

"Oh for Christ's sake."

I slip a bit and she catches my arm. "So this doesn't bother you? As a Midwesterner, you're unbothered? Or did you just not have a sense of what was going on?"

"So if I noticed or didn't, why does it have to be *my* deal? What, because there's assholes in the world I don't get to ride the Zipper?"

"This is potentially key," I say. "This may be just the sort of regional eroto-political contrast the East Coast magazine is keen for. The core value informing a kind of eroto-willed political stoicism on your part is your prototypically Midwestern appreciation of fun—"



"Buy me some pork skins, you dipshit."

"—whereas on the East Coast, eroto-political indignation *is* the fun. In New York a woman who'd been hung upside down and ogled would get a whole lot of other women together and there'd be this frenzy of eroto-political indignation. They'd confront the guy. File an injunction. The management would find themselves litigating—violation of a woman's right to non-harassed fun. I'm telling you. Personal and political fun merge somewhere just east of Cleveland, for women."

Native Companion kills a mosquito without looking. "And they all take Prozac and stick the finger down their throat too out there. The ought to try just climbing on and spinning an saying, 'Fuck 'em.' That's pretty much all you ca do with assholes."

12:35 P.M.

Lunchtime. The fairgrounds are a Saint V tus' dance of blacktop footpaths, the ax ons and dendrites of mass spectation, connectin buildings and barns and corporate tents. Eac path is flanked, pretty much along its whol length, by booths hawking food, and I realize tha there's a sort of digestive subtheme running a through the fair. In a way, we're all here to b swallowed up. The main gate's maw admits u and tightly packed slow masses move peristalt cally along complex systems of branching path engage in complex cash-and-energy transfers a the villi alongside the paths, and are finall both filled and depleted, expelled out of exits de signed for heavy-flow expulsion. And then, course, the food itself. There are tall Kaopectate colored shacks that sell Illinois Dairy Counc milk shakes for an off-the-scale $2.50—thoug they're mind-bendingly good milk shakes, silk and so thick they don't even insult your intel ligence with a straw or spoon, giving you in stead a kind of plastic trowel. There ar uncountable pork options—Paulie's Pork Out The Pork Patio, Freshfried Pork Skins, The Por Avenue Cafe. The Pork Avenue Cafe is a "10 Percent All-Pork Establishment," says its loud speaker. No way I'm eating any pork after thi morning's swine stress, anyway. And it is at leas ninety-five degrees in the shade, and due east o Livestock the breeze is, shall we say, fragrant. Bu food is being bought and ingested at an incred ible clip all up and down the path. Everyone packed in, eating and walking, moving slowly twenty abreast, sweating, shoulders rubbing, th air spicy with armpits and Coppertone, cheek t jowl, a peripatetic feeding frenzy. Fifteen percen of the female fairgoers here have their hair i curlers. Forty percent are clinically fat. By th way, Midwestern fat people have no compunc tion about wearing shorts or halter tops. Th food booths are ubiquitous, and each one has line before it. Zipper or no, Native Companio is "*storved*," she says, "to *daith*." She puts on a par odic hick accent whenever I use a term lik "peripatetic."

There are Lemon Shake-Ups, Ice Cold Melo Man booths, Citrus Push-Ups, and Hawaiia Shaved Ice you can suck the syrup out of an then crunch the ice. But a lot of what's gettin bought and gobbled is not hot-weather food at all bright-yellow popcorn that stinks of salt; onio rings as big as leis; Poco Peños Stuffed Jalapeñ

Photographs courtesy of the Illinois State Fa

Everyone is densely packed in, eating and walking, moving slowly, twenty abreast, sweating, shoulders rubbing, the air spicy with armpits and Coppertone, cheek to jowl, a peripatetic feeding frenzy

ppers; Zorba's Gyros; shiny fried chicken; Bert's rritos—"Big As You're [sic] Head"; hot Ital- n beef; hot New York City beef; Jojo's Quick ied Doughnuts; pizza by the shingle-sized slice; d chitlins and crab Rangoon and Polish sausage. here are towering plates of "Curl Fries," which e pubic-hair-shaped and make people's fingers ine in the sun. Cheez-Dip hot dogs. Pony pups. ot fritters. Philly steak. Ribeye BBQ Corral. anie's Original 1/2-lb. Burgers booth's sign says ! Choices—Rare or Mooin'." I can't believe eople eat this stuff in this kind of heat. There's e green reek of fried tomatoes. The sky is cloud- ss and galvanized, and the sun fairly pulses. The ise of deep fryers forms a grisly sound-carpet all and down the paths. The crowd moves at one ow pace, eating, densely packed between the ws of booths. The Original 1-lb. Butterfly Pork hop booth has a sign: "Pork: The Other White eat"—the only discernible arm wave to the alth-conscious. This is the Midwest: no nachos, chili, no Evian, nothing Cajun. But holy ackerel, are there sweets: fried dough, black alnut taffy, fiddlesticks, hot Crackerjack. aramel apples for a felonious $1.50. Angel's reath, known also as Dentist's Delight. There's ll-Butter Fudge, Rice Krispie–squarish things lled Krakkles. Angel Hair cotton candy. There e funnel cakes: cake batter quick-fried to a tor- adic spiral and rolled in sugared butter. An- her artery clogger: elephant ears, an album-sized xpanse of oil-fried dough slathered with butter d cinnamon-sugar—cinnamon toast from hell. o one is in line for ears except the morbidly ese.

1:10 P.M.

Here we've got as balanced in dimension a heifer as any you'll see today. A high- lume heifer, but also solid on mass. Good to ok at in terms of rib length to depth. Depth of rerib. Notice the depth of flank on the front arter. We'd like to see maybe perhaps a little ore muscle mass on the rear flank. Still, an out- anding heifer."

We're in the Jr. Livestock Center. The ring of ws moves around the perimeter of the dirt cir- e, each led by an ag-family kid. The "Jr." ap- rently refers to the owners, not the animals. ch cow's kid holds a long poker with a right- gled tooth at its end and prods the cow into the center of the ring to move in a tighter circle. The beef-show official is dressed just like the kids in the ring—[illegible] shirt, bandanna around neck. On him it doesn't look goofy. Plus he's got a stunning white cowboy hat. While Ms. Illinois Beef Queen presides from a dais decked with flowers sent over from the horticulture show, the official stands in the



arena itself, his legs apart and his thumbs in his belt, 100 percent man, radiating livestock savvy. "Okay this next heifer, a lot of depth of rib but a little tighter in the fore flank. A bit tighter-flanked, if you will, from the standpoint of capacity."

The owners—farm kids, deep-rural kids from back-of-beyond counties like Piatt, Moultrie, Vermilion, all here because they're county-fair winners—are earnest, nervous, pride-puffed. Dressed rurally up. Straw-colored crewcuts. High number of freckles per capita. Kids remarkable for a kind of classic Rockwellian USA averageness, the products of balanced diets, vigorous daily exertion, and solid GOP upbringings. The Jr. Livestock Center bleachers are half-full, and it is all ag-people, parents mostly, many with video cameras. Cowhide vests and ornate dress-boots and simply amazing hats. Illinois farmers are rural and inarticulate, but they are not poor. Just the amount of revolving credit you need to capitalize a hundred-acre operation—seed and herbicides, heavy equipment and crop insurance—makes a lot of them millionaires on paper. Media dirges notwithstanding, banks are no more keen to foreclose

In the Poultry Building there's a thin stink. Bits of feather float. The noise is horrifying. I think this must be what insanity sounds like. No wonder madmen clutch their heads

on Midwestern farms than they are on Third World nations; they're in that deeply. Nobody here wears sunglasses; everyone's in long pants and tanned in an earth-tone, all-business way. And if the fair's ag-pros are also stout, it is in a harder, squarer, somehow more *earned* way than the tourists on the paths outside. The fathers in the bleachers have bushy brows and simply enormous thumbs, I notice. Native Companion keeps making growly throat noises about the beef official. The Jr. Livestock Center is cool and dim and spicy with livestock. The atmosphere is good-natured but serious. Nobody's eating any booth-food, and nobody's carrying the fair's complimentary "Governor Edgar" shopping bags.

"An excellent heifer from a profile standpoint."

"How we [illegible] with exceptional mass in the rear quarter."

I can't tell whose cow is winning.

"Certainly the most extreme heifer out here in terms of frame to depth."

Some of the cows look drugged. Maybe they're just superbly trained. You can imagine these farm kids getting up so early they can see their breath and leading their cows in practice circles under the cold stars, then having to do their chores. I feel good in here. The cows all have colored ribbons on their tails. They are shampooed and mild-eyed and lovely, incontinence notwithstanding. They're also assets. The ag-lady beside us says her family's operation will "realize" perhaps [illegible] coming up. Illinois farmers call their farms "operations," rarely "farms" and never "spreads." The lady says $2,500 is "maybe about around half" what the ag-family has spent on the heifer's breeding and care. "We do this for pride," she says. This is more like it—pride, care, selfless expense. The little boy's chest puffs out as the official tips his blinding hat. Farm spirit. Oneness with crop and stock. The ag-lady says that the official is a beef buyer for a major Peoria packing plant and that the bidders in the upcoming auction (five brown suits and three string ties on the dais) are from McDonald's, Burger King, White Castle, etc. Meaning that the mild-eyed winners have been sedulously judged as meat. The ag-lady has a particular bone to pick with McDonald's, "'cause they always come in and overbid high on the champions and don't care about nothing else. Mess up the pricing." Her husband confirms they got "screwed back to front" on last year's bidding.

3:00 P.M.

We hurtle here and there. Paid atten dance today is 100,000-plus. A scur of clouds cuts the heat, but I'm on my third shirt Society horse show at Coliseum. Wheat-weavin demonstration in Hobbies, Arts & Crafts Build ing. Peonies like supernovas in the horticultur tent. I have no time. I'm getting a sort of visual overload headache. Native Companion is als stressed. And we're not the only tourists wit this pinched glazed hurry-up look—there are jus too damn many things to experience. Arm wrestling finals where bald men fart audibly wit effort. Drum and bugle competition in Mille Beer tent. Corn-fed girls in overalls cut off at th pockets. Everyone's very excited at everything Tottery Ronald McD. is working the crowd Club Mickey D's 3-on-3 Hoops. Three of the si basketball players are black, the first I've see since Mrs. Edgar's hired kids. Pygmy Goat Sho at Goat Barn. Native Companion has zinc oxid on her nose. I'm sure we'll miss something.

4:05 P.M.

We're about 100 yards shy of the Poultr Building when I break down. I've bee a rock about the prospect of poultry all day, bu now my nerve goes. I can't go in there. *Listen* t the thousands of sharp squawking beaks in there I say. Native Companion not unkindly offers t hold my hand, talk me through it. It is 100 degree and I have pygmy-goat shit on my shoe and ar almost crying with fear and embarrassment. have to sit down on a green bench to collect my self. The noise of the Poultry Building is horrify ing. I think this is what insanity must sound like No wonder madmen clutch their heads. There a thin stink. Bits of feather float. I hunch on th bench. We're high on a ridge overlooking th carnival rides. When I was eight, at the Cham paign County Fair, I was pecked without provo cation, flown at and pecked by a renegade fow savagely, just under the right eye.

Sitting on the bench, I watch the carnies wa below. They mix with no one, never seem t leave Happy Hollow. Late tonight, I'll watc them drop flaps to turn their booths into tent They'll smoke cheap dope and drink peppermir schnapps and pee out onto the midway's dirt. guess they're the gypsies of the rural Unite

ites—itinerant, insular, swarthy, unclean, not be trusted. You are in no way drawn to them. ey all have the same blank hard eyes as peo- in the bathrooms of East Coast bus termi- is. They want your money and maybe to look your skirt; beyond that you're just blocking the w. Next week they'll dismantle and pack and l up to the Wisconsin State Fair, where they'll ver set foot off the midway they pee on.

While I'm watching from the bench, an old hered man in an Illinois Poultry Association careers past on one of those weird three- heeled carts, like a turbocharged heelchair, and runs neatly over my aker. This ends up being my one unas- ed interview of the day, and it's brief. e man keeps revving his cart's engine a biker. "*Traish*," he calls the carnies. owlifes." He gestures down at the irling rides. "Wouldn't let my own ls go off down there on a goddamn t." He raises pullets down near Olney. has something in his cheek. "Steal u blind. Drug-addicted and such. indle you nekked them games. Traish. e, I ever year we drive up, I carry my llet like this here." He points to his . His wallet's on a big steel clip at- hed to a wire on his belt; the whole ng looks vaguely electrified. Q: "But they want to? Your kids? Hit the Hol- w?" He spits brownly. "*Hail* no. We all me for the shows." He means the live- ck competitions. "See some folks, talk ck. Drink a beer. Work all year round raising 'em show birds. It's for pride. And to see folks. ows're over Tuesday, why, we go on home." He ks like a bird himself. His face is mostly nose, skin loose and pebbly like poultry's. His eyes the color of denim. "Rest of this here's for city ople." Spits. He means Springfield, Decatur, rmal. "Walk around, stand in line, eat junk, buy vneers. Give their wallet to the traish. Don't en know there's folks come here to work up re." He gestures up at the barns, then spits in, leaning way out over the cart to do it. "We me up to work, see some folks. Drink a beer. ng our own goddamn food. Mother packs a mper. Hail, what we'd want to go on down ere for? No folks we know down there." He ghs. Asks my name. "It is good to see folks," he s before leaving me and peeling out in his chair, ading for the chicken din. "We all stayin' up to motel. Watch your wallet, boy."

AUGUST 14, 6:00 A.M.

The dawn is foggy. The sky looks like soap. It rained in brutal sheets last night, dam- d tents, tore up corn near my motel. Mid- western thunderstorms are real Old Testament temple clutchers: Richter-scale thunder, big zig- zags of cartoon lightning. Happy Hollow is a bog as I walk along the midway, passing an enfilade of snores from the booths and tents. Native Com- panion went home last night. My sneakers are al- ready soaked. Someone behind the flaps of the Shoot-2D-Ducks-With-an-Air-Rifle booth is hav- ing a wicked coughing fit, punctuated with ob- scenities. Distant sounds of garbage Dumpsters being emptied. The Blomsness-Thebault man- agement trailer has a blinky electric burglar alarm on it. The goddamn roosters in the Poultry Build- ing are at it already. Thunder-mutters way off east over Indiana. The trees shudder and shed drops in the breeze. The paths are empty, eerie, shiny with rain.



[illegible]

Sheep Barn. I am looking at legions of sleeping sheep. I am the only waking hu- man in here. It is cool and quiet. Sheep ex- crement has an evil vomity edge to it, but olfactorily it is not too bad in here. One or two sheep are upright but silent. No fewer than four ag-pros are also in the pens, sleeping right up next to their sheep, about which the less speculation the better as far as I'm concerned. The roof in here is leaky and most of the straw is sopping. In here are yearling ewes, brood ewes, ewe lambs, fall lambs. There are signs on every pen. We've got Corriedales, Hamp- shires, Dorset Horns, Columbias. You could get a Ph.D. just in sheep, from the looks of it Rambouillets, Oxfords, Suffolks, Shropshires, Cheviots, Southdowns. Outside again, undu- lating ghosts of fog on the fairground paths.

[illegible] tograph from the [illegible]

air of hasty abandonment.

8:20 A.M.

Press room, fourth floor, Illinois Building. I'm the only credentialed member of the press without a little plywood cubbyhole for mail and press releases. Two guys from an ag-newspaper are trying to hook a fax machine up to a rotary-phone jack. A state-fair PR guy arrives for the daily press briefing. We have coffee and unidentifiable muffinish things, compliments of Wal-Mart. This afternoon's highlights: Midwest Truck and Tractor Pull, the "Bill Oldani 100" U.S.A.C. auto race. Tonight's Grandstand show is to be the poor old doddering Beach Boys, who I suspect now must make their entire living from state fairs. The special guest is America, another poor old doddering group. The PR guy cannot give away all his free press passes to the concert. I learn that I missed some law-and-order dramatics yesterday: two Zipper-riding minors were detained last night when a vial of crack fell from the pocket of one of them and direct-hit a state trooper alertly eating a Lemon Push-Up on the midway below. Also reported: a rape or date rape in Parking Lot 6, assorted buncos and D&D's. Two reporters also vomited on from great heights in two separate incidents under two separate Near-Death-Experience rides, trying to cover the Hollow.

8:30 A.M.

A Macy's-float-sized inflatable Ronald, seated and eerily Buddha-like, presides over the Club Mickey D's tent. A family is having their picture taken in front of the inflatable Ronald, arranging their little kids in a careful pose.

8:42 A.M.

Fourth trip to the bathroom in three hours. Elimination can be a dicey undertaking here. The fair has scores of Midwest Pottyhouse-brand portable toilets—man-sized plastic huts, somewhat reminiscent of Parisian *pissoirs*, each with its own undulating shroud of flies, and your standard heavy-use no-flush outhouse smell—and I for one would rather succumb to a rupture than use a Pottyhouse, though the lines for them are long and cheery. The only real rest rooms are in the big exhibit buildings. The Coliseum's is like a grade-school boys' room, especially the long communal urinal, a kind of huge porcelain trough. Performance anxieties and other fears abound here, with upwards of twenty guys flanking and facing one another, each with his unit

out. The highlight is watching Midwestern ag guys struggle with suspenders and overall strap as they exit the stalls.

9:30 A.M.

I'm once again at the capacious McDonald tent, at the edge, the titanic inflatable clow presiding. There's a fair-sized crowd in the bas ketball bleachers at one side and rows of foldin chairs on another. It's the Illinois State Jr. Bator Twirling Finals. A metal loudspeaker begins t emit disco, and little girls pour into the tent fro all directions, gamboling and twirling in vivi costumes. In the stands, video cameras come ou by the score, and I can tell it's pretty much ju me and a thousand parents.

The baroque classes and divisions, both tea and solo, go from age three(!) to sixteen, with ep ithetic signifiers—the four-year-olds compose th Sugar 'N' Spice division, and so on. I'm in a cha up front behind the competition's judges, intro duced as "varsity twirlers" from (oddly) the Un versity of Kansas. They are four frosted blond who smile a lot and blow huge grape bubbles.

The twirler squads are all from different town Mount Vernon and Kankakee seem especiall rich in twirlers. The twirlers' spandex costume differently colored for each team, are paint-tigh and brief in the legs. The coaches are grim, tat lithe-looking women, clearly twirlers once, o the far side of their glory now and very seriou looking, each with a clipboard and whistle. Th teams go into choreographed routines, each rou tine with a title and a designated disco or sho tune, full of compulsory baton-twirling maneuve with highly technical names. A mother next t me is tracking scores on what looks almost like a astrology chart, and is in no mood to explai anything to a novice baton watcher.

The routines are wildly complex, and the loud speaker's play-by-play is mostly in code. All I ca determine for sure is that I've bumbled into wha has to be the most spectator-hazardous event a the fair. Missed batons go all over, whistlin wickedly. The three-, four-, and five-year-old aren't that dangerous, though they do spend mo of their time picking up dropped batons and try ing to hustle back into place—the parents of e pecially fumble-prone twirlers howl in fury fro the stands while the coaches chew gum griml But the smaller girls don't really have the arm strength to endanger anybody, although one judg takes a Sugar 'N' Spice's baton across the bridg of the nose and has to be helped from the tent

But when the sevens and eights hit the floor fo a series of "Armed Service medleys" (spande with epaulets and officers' caps and batons ove shoulders like M16's), errant batons start pin wheeling into the ceiling, tent's sides, and crowd

The baton twirlers' spandex costumes are pant-tight and brief in the legs. The coaches, each with a clipboard, are grim, tan, lithe-looking women, clearly twirlers once, on the inside of their glory years.

with real force. I myself duck several times. A
n just down the row takes one in the solar
xus and falls out of his metal chair with a hor-
crash. The batons are embossed "Regulation
ngth" on the shaft and have white rubber stop-
rs on each end, but it is that hard dry kind of
ber, and the batons themselves aren't light. I
n't think it's an accident that police night-
cks are also called service batons.

Physically, even within same-age teams, there
marked incongruities in size and develop-
nt. One nine-year-old is several heads taller
an another, and they're trying to do a complex
ck-and-forth duet thing with just one baton,
hich ends up taking out a bulb in one of the
t's steel hanging lamps, showering part of the
nds with glass. A lot of the younger twirlers look
her anorexic or gravely ill. There are no fat ba-
n twirlers.

A team of ten-year-olds in the Gingersnap
ss have little cotton bunny tails on their cos-
ne bottoms and rigid papier-mâché ears, and
ey can do some serious twirling. A squad of
even-year-olds from Towanda does an involved
utine in tribute to Operation Desert Storm. To
st of the acts there's either a cutesy ultrafem-
ne aspect or a stern butch military one, with
tle in between. Starting with the twelve-year-
ls—one team in black spandex that looks like
eesecake leotards—there is, I'm afraid, a frank
xuality that begins to get uncomfortable. Odd-
it's the cutesy feminine performances that re-
lt in the serious audience casualties. A dad
nding up near the top of the stands with a
shiba video camera to his eye takes a toma-
wking baton directly in the groin and falls over
somebody eating a funnel cake, and they take
t good bits of several rows below them, and
ere's an extended halt to the action, during
hich I decamp. As I clear the last row of chairs
t another baton comes *wharp-wharp*ing cruel-
right over my shoulder, caroming viciously off
Ronald's inflated thigh.

LOS ANGELES

The Expo Building, a huge enclosed mall-like thing, AC'd down to eighty degrees, th a gray cement floor and a hardwood mezza-
e overhead. Every interior inch is given over to mmerce of a special and lurid sort. Just inside the east entrance, a man with a headset mike is slic-
ing up a block of wood and then a tomato, standing on a box in a booth that says "SharpKut," hawking these spin-offs of Ginsu knives, "As Seen on TV." Next door is a booth offering personalized pet-ID tags. Another for the infamous mail-order-advertised Clapper, which turns on appliances automatically at the sound of two hands clapping (but also at the sound of a cough, sneeze, or sniff, I discover; *caveat emptor*). There's booth after booth, each with an audience whose credulity seems sincere. A large percentage of the booths show signs of hasty assembly and say "As Seen on TV" in bright brave colors. The salesmen all stand on raised platforms; all have headset mikes and rich neutral media voices.



The Copper Kettle All-Butter Fudge booth does a brisk air-conditioned business. There's something called a Full Immersion Body Fat Analysis for $8.50. A certain CompuVac, Inc., offers a $1.50 Computerized Personality Analysis. Its booth's computer panel is tall and full of blinking lights and reel-to-reel tapes, like an old bad sci-fi-film computer. My own Personality Analysis, a slip of paper that protrudes like a tongue from a red-lit slot, says, "Your Boldness of Nature Is Ofset [sic] with the Fear of Taking Risk." There's a booth that offers clock faces superimposed on varnished photorealist paintings of Christ, John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe. There's a Computerized Posture Evaluation booth. A lot of the headsetted vendors are about my age or younger. Something overscrubbed about them suggests a Bible-college background. It is just cool enough in here for a sweat-soaked shirt to get clammy. One vendor recites a pitch for Ms. Suzanne Somers's Thighmaster while a woman in a leotard demonstrates the product, lying on her side on the fiberboard counter. I'm in the Expo Building almost two hours, and every time I look up the poor woman's still at it with the Thighmaster. Most of the vendors won't answer questions and give me beady looks when I stand there making notes. But the Thighmaster lady, cheer-

tograph from the *Los Angeles Times*

The cloggers hold hands and whirl each other around and in and out, tapping like mad, their torsos upright and almost formal, as if only incidentally attached to the blur of legs below

tul, friendly, violently cross-eyed, informs me she gets an hour off for lunch at 2:00 P.M., then goes another eight hours to closing at 11:00 P.M. I say her thighs must be pretty darn well Mastered by now, and her leg sounds like a banister when she raps her knuckle against it. We both have a laugh, until her vendor asks me to scram.

Booth after booth. A Xanadu of chintzola. Obscure non-stick cookware. "Eye Glasses Cleaned Free." A booth with anti-cellulite sponges. Dippin' Dots futuristic ice cream. A woman with Velcro straps on her sneakers gets fountain-pen ink out of a linen tablecloth with a Chapsticky-looking spot remover whose banner says "As Seen on TV's 'Amazing Discoveries,'" a late-night infomercial I'm kind of a fan of. A booth that for $9.95 will take a photo and superimpose your face on either an FBI Wanted poster or a *Penthouse* cover. An "MIA—Bring Them Home!" booth staffed by women playing Go Fish. An anti-abortion booth called Lifesavers that lures you over with little candies. Sand art. Shredded-ribbon art. A booth for "Latest Advance! Rotary Nose Hair Clippers" whose other sign reads (I kid you not), "Do Not Pull Hair From Nose, May Cause Fatal Infection." Two different booths for collectible sports-star cards, "Top Ranked Investment of the Nineties." And tucked way back on one curve of the mezzanine's ellipse—*yes*—black-velvet paintings, including—*yes*—several of Elvis in pensive poses.

Also on display is the expo's second economy—the populist evangelism of the rural Midwest. It is not your cash they want but to "Make a Difference in Your Life." And they make no bones about it. A Church of God booth offers a Computerized Bible Quiz. Its computer is CompuVacish in appearance. I go eighteen for twenty on the quiz and am invited behind a chamois curtain for a "person-to-person faith exploration," which no thanks. The conventional vendors get along fine with the Baptists and Jews for Jesus who operate booths right near them. They all laugh and banter back and forth. The SharpKut guy sends all the vegetables he's microsliced over to the Lifesavers booth, where they put them out with the candy. The scariest spiritual booth is right up near the west exit, where something called Covenant Faith Triumphant Church has a big hanging banner that asks, "What Is the ONE Man Made Thing Now in Heaven?" and I stop to ponder, which with charismatics is death, because a heavy-browed woman is out around the booth's counter like a shot and into my personal space. She says, "Give up? Give up do you?" She's looking at me very intensely, but there's something about her gaze: it is like she's looking *at* my eyes rather than *in* them. "What one man-made thing?" I ask. She puts a finger to her palm and makes screwing motions. Signifying coitus. I don't say "coitus" out loud, though. "Not but only thing," she says. "The holes in Christ's palms." I'm screwing her finger in. Except isn't it pretty well known that Roman crucifees were nailed at the wrists, since palm-flesh won't support weight? But now I've been drawn into the dialogue, going so far as to let her take my arm and pull me toward the booth's counter. "Lookee here for a second now," she says. She has both hands around my arm. A Midwestern child of humanist academics gets trained early on to avoid these weird-eyed eager rural Christians who accost your space to say "Not interested" at the front door and "No thanks" to mimeoed pamphlets, to look right through streetcorner missionaries like they were stemming for change. But the woman drags me toward the Covenant Faith counter, where a final oak box rests, a sign propped on it: "Where Will YOU Be When YOU Look Like THIS?" "Take a look-see in here," the woman says. The box has a hole in its top. I peek. Inside the box is a human skull. I'm pretty sure it's plastic. The interior lighting is tricky, but I'm pretty sure the skull isn't genuine. I haven't inhaled for several minutes. The woman is looking at the side of my face. "Are you *sure*? is the question," she says. I manage to make my straightening-up motion lead right into a backing-away motion. "Are you a hunderd percent *sure*?" Overhead, on the mezzanine, the Thighmaster lady is still at it, smiling cross-eyed into space.

1:36 P.M.

I'm on a teetery stool watching the Illinois Prairie Cloggers competition in a structure called the Twilight Ballroom that's packed with [illegible] and well over 100 degrees. I'd nipped in here only to get a bottle of soda pop on my way to the Truck and Tractor Pull. By now the pull's got to be nearly over, and in half an hour the big U.S.A.C. dirt-track auto race starts. But I cannot tear myself away from the scene in here. I'd imagined [illegible] Clampett types in tattered hats and

small boots, stompin' and whoopin', etc. I
ess clogging, Scotch-Irish in origin and the
nce of choice in Appalachia, did used to involve
ual clogs and boots and slow stomps. But clog
g has now miscegenated with square dancing
d honky-tonk boogie to become a kind of in-
cately synchronized, absolutely kick-ass coun-
tap dance.

There are teams from Pekin, Le Roy, Rantoul,
iro, Morton. They each do three numbers.
e music is up-tempo country or dance-pop.
ch team has anywhere from four to ten dancers.
v of the women are under thirty-five, fewer still
der 175 pounds. They're country mothers,
l-cheeked gals with bad dye jobs and big pret-
legs. They wear western wear tops and
diskirts with multiple ruffled slips underneath;
d every once in a while they grab handfuls of
th and flip the skirts up like cancan dancers.
hen they do this they either yip or whoop, as
e spirit moves them. The men all have thin-
ng hair and cheesy rural faces, and their skin-
legs are rubberized blurs. The men's western
irts have piping on the chest and shoulders.
he teams are all color-coordinated—blue and
hite, black and red. The white shoes all the
ncers wear look like golf shoes with metal taps
mped on.

Their numbers are to everything from Waylon
d Tammy to Aretha, Miami Sound Machine,
il Diamond's "America." The routines have
me standard tap-dance moves—sweep, flare,
orus-line kicking. But it is fast and sustained and
oreographed down to the last wrist-flick. And
uare dancing's genes can be seen in the up-
ght, square-shouldered postures on the floor,
d there's a kind of florally enfolding tendency
the choreography, some of which uses high-
eed promenades. But it is methedrine-paced
d exhausting to watch because your own feet
ve; and it is erotic in a way that makes MTV
k lame. The cloggers' feet are too fast to be
n, really, but they all tap out the exact same
ythm. A typical routine is something like:
atatatatatatatatatata. The variations around the
sic rhythm are baroque. When they kick or
n, the two-beat absence of tap complexifies
pattern.

The audience is packed in right to the edge of
e portable hardwood flooring. The teams are
stly married couples. The men are either rail-
in or have big hanging guts. A couple of the
n on a blue-and-white team are great fluid
staire-like dancers, but mostly it is the women
ho compel. The men have constant smiles, but
e women look orgasmic; they're the really se-
us ones, transported. Their yips and whoops are
voluntary, pure exclamation. They are arousing.
he audience claps savvily on the backbeat and
hoops when the women do. It is almost all folks
from the ag and livestock shows—the flannel shirts, khaki pants, seed caps and freckles. The spectators are soaked in sweat and extremely happy. I think this is the ag-community's special treat, a chance here to cut loose a little while their animals sleep in the heat. The transactions between cloggers and crowd seem synecdochic of the fair as a whole: a culture talking to itself, presenting credentials for its own inspection, bean farmers and herbicide brokers and 4-H sponsors and people who drive pickup trucks because they really need them. They eat non-fair food from insulated hampers and drink beer and pop and stomp in perfect time and put their hands on neighbors' shoulders to shout in their ears while the cloggers whirl and fling sweat on the crowd.

There are no black people in the Twilight Ballroom, and the awakened looks on the younger ag-kids' faces have this astonished aspect, like they didn't realize their race could dance like this. Three married couples from Rantoul, wearing full western bodysuits the color of raw coal, weave an incredible filigree of high-speed tap around Aretha's "R-E-S-P-E-C-T," and there's no hint of racial irony in the room; the song has been made this people's own, emphatically. This Nineties version of clogging does have something sort of pugnaciously white about it, a kind of performative nose-thumbing at M.C. Hammer. There's an atmosphere in the room—not racist, but aggressively *white*. It's hard to describe [illegible] atmosphere is the same at a lot of rural Midwest events. It is not like a black person who came in would be ill treated; it's more like it would just never occur to a black person to come here.



I can barely hold the tablet still to scribble journalistic impressions, the floor is rumbling under so many boots and sneakers. The record player is old-fashioned, the loudspeakers are shitty, and it sounds fantastic. Two of the dancing Rantoul wives are fat, but with great legs. Who could practice this kind of tapping as much as they must and stay fat? I think maybe rural Midwestern women are just congenitally big. But these people clogging get *down*. And they do it as a troupe, a collective, with none of the narcissistic look-at-me grandstanding of great dancers in rock clubs. They hold hands and whirl each other around and in and out, tapping like mad, their torsos upright and almost formal, as if only incidentally attached to the blur of legs below. It

tograph courtesy of the Illinois State Fair

goes on and on. I'm rooted to my stool. Each team seems the best yet. In the crowd's other side across the floor I can see the old poultry farmer, he of the carny hatred and electrified wallet. He's still got his poultry cap on, making a megaphone of his hands to whoop with the women, leaning way forward in his geriatric scooter, body bobbing like he's stomping in time, while his little cowboy boots stay clamped in their stays.

Trying to hurry to the Grandstand, eating a corn dog cooked in 100 percent soybean oil. I can hear the hornety engines of the U.S.A.C. 100 race. A huge plume of track dust hangs over the Grandstand. Tinny burble of excited PA announcer. The corn dog tastes strongly of soybean oil, which itself tastes like corn oil that's been strained through an old gym towel. Tickets for the race are an obscene $13.50. Baton twirling is *still* under way in Club Mickey D's tent. A band called Captain Rat & the Blind Rivets is playing at Lincoln Stage, and as I pass I can see dancers in there. They look jagged and arrhythmic and blank, bored in that hip young East Coast way, facing in instead of out, not touching their partners. The people not dancing don't even look at them, and after the clogging the whole thing looks unspeakably numb and lonely.

The official name of the race is the William "Wild Bill" Oldani Memorial 100 Sprint Car Race of the Valvoline-U.S.A.C. Silver Crown Series. The Grandstand seats 9,800 and is packed. The noise is beyond belief. The race is nearly over: the electric sign on the infield says "LAP 92." The leader is number 26, except his black-and-green Skoal car is in the middle of the pack. Apparently he's lapped people. The crowd is mostly men, very tan, smoking, 70 percent with mustaches and billed caps with automotive associations. Most of them wear earplugs; the ones in the real know wear thick airline-worker noise-filter headsets. The seventeen-page program is almost impenetrable. There are either forty-nine or fifty cars, called either Pro Dirt or Silver Crown, and they're basically go-carts from hell, with a soapbox-derby chassis and huge dragster tires, gleaming tangles of pipes and spoilers jutting out all over, and unabashedly phallic bulges up front. The program says these models are what they used to race at Indy in the 1950s. The cars' cockpits are open and webbed in straps and roll bars; the drivers wear helmets the same color as their cars, with white masks on their face to keep out the choking dust. The cars come in all hues. Most look to be sponsored by either Skoal or Marlboro. Pit cre in surgical white lean out into the track ar flash obscure commands written on little chal boards. The infield is clotted with trailers ar tow trucks and officials' stands and electric sign Women in skimpy tops stand on some of th trailers, seeming very partisan.

I can barely take my hands off my ears lon enough to turn the program's pages. The ca sound almost like jets—that insectile scream—h with a diesely, lawn-mowerish component yo can feel in your skull. The seating is on just on side of the Grandstand, on the straightaway, ar when the mass of cars passes it's unendurabl your very skeleton hurts from the noise, and yo ears are still belling when they come arour again. The cars go like mad bats on the straigh aways and then shift down for the tight turn their rear tires wobbling in the dirt. Certain ca pass other cars, and some people cheer when th do. Down at the bottom of the section a little bo held up by his father is rigid, facing away from th track, his hands clamped over his ears so ha his elbows stick way out, and his face is a rict of pain when they pass. The little boy and I so of rictus at each other. A fine dirty dust hangs the air and coats everything, including tongue Then all of a sudden binoculars come out and e eryone stands as there's some sort of screechin slide and crash on a far turn, all the way across th infield; and firemen in slickers and hats go racin out there in full-sized fire trucks, and the P voice's pitch goes way up but is still incompr hensible, and a man with those airline earmuf in the officials' stand leans out and flails at the a with a bright-yellow flag, and the go-carts thro tle down to autobahn speed, and the pace car, Trans Am, comes out and leads them around and everybody stands, and I stand too. It is im possible to see anything but a swizzle stick smoke above the far turn, and the engine nois is endurable and the PA silent, and the relativ quiet hangs there while we all wait for news; an I look around at all the faces below the raise binoculars, but it's not at all clear what we'r hoping for.

Ten-minute line for a chocolate milk shak Oily blacktop stink on heated paths. I as a little boy to describe the taste of his funne cake, and he runs away. My ears are still mossil ringing—everything sounds car-phonish. Displa of a 17.6-lb. zucchini squash outside the Agri Industries Pavilion. One big zucchini, all right. I the Coliseum, the only historical evidence of th tractor pulls is huge ideograms of tire track mounds of scored dirt, dark patches of tobacc juice, smells of burnt rubber and oil. Nearby is

In the boxing tent, two ten-year-olds stand toe to toe, whaling the living shit out of each other. Neither has any interest in defense. They windmill away while scary dads chew gum in their corners.

s on display from the city of Peoria's All-Ethanol is System; it is painted to resemble a huge ear corn.

GOOD EATS

Back again at the seemingly inescapable Club Mickey D's. The tent is now set up r Illinois Golden Gloves Boxing. Out on the or is a square of four boxing rings. The rings e made out of clothesline and poles anchored cement-filled tires, one ring per age division: xteens, Fourteens, Twelves, Tens(!). Here's nother unhyped but riveting spectacle. If you ant to see genuine violence, go check out a olden Gloves tourney. None of your adult pros' lky footwork or Rope-a-Dope defenses here. ere human asses are thoroughly kicked in what e essentially playground brawls with white-pped gloves and brain-shaped head guards. he combatants' tank tops say things like "Peo-a Jr. Boxing" and "Elgin Fight Club." The rings' rners have stools for the kids to sit on and et worked over by their teams' coaches. The aches are clearly dads: florid, blue-jawed, bull-ecked, flinty-eyed men who oversee sanctioned rawls. Now a fighter's mouth guard goes flying ut of the Fourteens' ring, end over end, trail-ng strings of spit, and the crowd around that ring owls. In the Sixteens' ring is a local Springfield id, Darrell Hall, against a slim fluid Latino, ullivano, from Joliet. Hall outweighs Sullivano y a good twenty pounds. Hall also looks like ev-ry kid who ever beat me up in high school, ght down to the wispy mustache and upper p's cruel twist. The crowd around the Sixteens' ng is all his friends—guys with muscle shirts nd gym shorts and gelled hair, girls in cutoff veralls and complex systems of barrettes. There e repeated shouts of "Kick his *ass*, Darrell!" The atino sticks and moves. Somebody in this tent smoking a joint, I can smell. The Sixteens an actually box. The ceiling's lights are bare albs in steel cones, hanging cockeyed from a day f batons. Everybody here pours sweat. The rein-arnation of every high-school cheerleader I ev-r pined for is in the Sixteens' crowd. The girls ry out and frame their faces with their hands hen Darrell gets hit. I do not know why cut-ff overall shorts have evaded the East Coast's shion ken; they are devastating. The fight in ourteens is stopped for a moment to let the ref wipe a gout of blood from one kid's glove. Sullivano glides and jabs, orbiting Hall. Hall is implacable, a hunched and feral fighter, boring in. Air explodes through his nose when he lands a blow. He keeps trying to back the Latino against the clothesline. People cool themselves with wood-handled fans from the Democratic Party. Big hairy mosquitoes work the crowd. The refs keep slapping at their necks. The rain has been heavy, and the mosquitoes are the bad kind, field-bred and rapacious. I can also see the Tens from this vantage, a vicious free-for-all between two tiny kids whose head guards make their skulls look too big for their bodies. Neither ten year-old has any interest in defense. Their shoes' toes touch as they windmill at each other, scoring at will. Scary dads chew gum in their corners. One kid's mouth guard keeps falling out. Now the Sixteens' crowd explodes as their loutish Hall catches Sullivano with an uppercut that puts him on his bottom. Sullivano gamely rises, but his knees wobble and he won't face the ref. Hall raises both arms and faces the crowd, disclosing a missing incisor. The girls betray their cheerleading backgrounds by clapping and jumping up and down at the same time. Hall shakes his gloves at the ceiling as several girls call his name, and you can feel it in the air's very ions: Darrell Hall is going to get laid before the night's over.

The digital thermometer in the Ronald-Buddha's left hand reads ninety-three degrees at 6: P.M. Behind him, big ominous scoop-of-coffee ice-cream clouds are massing at the western horizon, but the sun's still above them and very much a force. People's shadows on the paths are getting pointy. It's the part of the day when little kids cry from what their parents naively call exhaustion. Cicadas chirr in the grass by the tent. The ten-year-olds stand toe to toe and whale the living shit out of each other. It is the sort of savage mutual beating you see in black-and-white films of old-time fights. Their ring now has the largest crowd. The fight will be all but impossible to score. But then it is over in an instant at the second intermission, when one of the little boys, sitting on his stool, being whispered to by a dad with tattooed forearms, suddenly throws up. Prodigiously. For no apparent reason. Maybe a stomach punch recollected in tranquillity. It is kind of surreal. Vomit flies all over. Kids in the crowd go "Eeeyuuu." The sick fighter starts to cry. His scary coach and

Amid all the rotating neon and plunging machinery's roar and jagged screams and high-volume rock, the crowds seem radically happy, vivid, somehow awakened, sponges for sensuous data, feeding on stimuli

the ref wipe him down and help him from the ring, not ungently. His opponent, watching, tentatively puts up his arms.

So the old heave-ho is the last thing I see at Golden Gloves Boxing and then the first thing I see at Happy Hollow, right at sunset. Standing on the midway looking up at the Ring of Fire—a set of flame-colored train cars sent around and around the inside of a 100-foot neon hoop, the operator stalling the train at the top and hanging the patrons upside down, jackknifed over their seat belts, with loose change and eyeglasses raining down—looking up, I witness a thick coil of vomit arc from a car; it describes a 100-foot spiral and lands with a meaty splat between two young girls, who look from the ground to each other with expressions of slapstick horror. And when the flame train finally brakes at the ramp, a mortified-looking little kid wobbles off, damp and pale, staggering over toward a Lemon Shake-Up stand.

This is my last day at the fair, and I've put off a real survey of the Near-Death Experiences until my last hour. I want to get everything catalogued before the sun sets. I've already had some distant looks at the nighttime Hollow and have an idea that being down here in the dark, amid all this rotating neon and the mechanical clowns and plunging machinery's roar and jagged screams and barkers' pitches and high-volume rock, would be like the depiction of a bum acid trip in a bad Sixties movie. It strikes me hardest in the Hollow that I'm not spiritually Midwestern anymore, and no longer young—I do not like crowds, screams, amplified noise, or heat. I'll endure them if I have to, but they're sure not my idea of a magic community-interval. The crowds in the Hollow, though—mostly high-school couples, local toughs, and kids in single-sex packs, as the demographics of the fair shift to prime time—seem radically happy, vivid, somehow awakened, sponges for sensuous data, not bombarded by the stimuli but feeding on it. It is the first time I've felt really lonely at the fair.

Nor do I understand why some people will pay money to be careened and suspended and dropped and whipped back and forth at high speeds and hung upside down until somebody vomits. It seems to me like paying to be in a traffic accident. I do not get it; never have. It's not a regional or cultural thing. I think it's a matter of neurological makeup. The world divides into those who like the managed induction of terror and those who don't. I do not find terror exciting. I find it terrifying.

And Happy Hollow, I discover, offers nothing if not managed terror. And not one but two Tilt-a-Whirls. An experience called Wipe Out straps riders into fixed seats on a big lit disc that spins with a wobble like a coin that won't lie down. The Pirate Ship puts forty folks in a plastic galley and swings it in a pendulous arc until they're facing straight up and then down. The carny operating the Pirate Ship is made to wear an eye patch and parrot and hook, on the tip of which hook burns an impaled Marlboro. The operator of the Funhouse is slumped in a plastic control booth that reeks of sinsemilla.

The 104-foot Giant Gondola Wheel is a staid old Ferris wheel that puts you facing your seatmate in a kind of steel teacup. Its rotation is stately, but the cars at the top look like little lit thimbles, and you can hear thin female screams from up there as their dates grab the teacups' sides and joggle.

The lines are the longest for the really serious Near-Death Experiences: Ring of Fire, the Zipper, Hi Roller—which runs a high-speed train around the inside of an ellipse that is itself spinning at right angles to the train's motion. The crowds are dense and reek of bug repellent. Boys in Chicago Cubs shirts clutch their dates as they walk. There's something intensely *public* about young Midwestern couples. The girls have tall hair and bee-stung lips, and their eye makeup runs in the heat and gives them a vampirish aspect. The overt sexuality of high-school girls is not just a coastal thing. The Amour Express sends another little train at 60-plus mph around a topologically wobbled ring, half of which is enclosed in a fiberglass tunnel with neon hearts and arrows. A fallen packet of Trojans lies near the row of Lucite cubes in which slack-jawed cranes try to pick up jewelry.

It seems journalistically irresponsible to try to describe the Hollow's rides without experiencing at least one firsthand. The Kiddie Kopter is a carousel of miniature Sikorsky prototypes rotating at a sane and dignified clip. The propellers on each helicopter rotate as well. My copter is a bit snug, admittedly, even with my knees drawn up to my chest. I get kicked off the ride, though, when the whole machine's tilt reveals that I weigh quite a bit more than the maximum 100 pounds;

I have to say that both the little kids on the
and the carny in charge were unnecessarily
le about the whole thing. Each ride has its
PA speaker with its own discharge of adrenal-
g rock, the Kiddie Koptors specifically playing
rge Michael's "I Want Your Sex." The late-
Hollow itself is an enormous sonic mash from
ch different sounds take turns protruding—
stly whistles, sirens, calliopes, heavy-metal
es, human screams hard to distinguish from
rded screams.

Both the Thunderbolt and the Octopus hurl
-spinning modular cars around a topologically
plex plane; the Thunderbolt's sides reveal fur-
r evidence of gas-
distress. Then
e's the Gravitron,
ically a cen-
ge—an enclosed,
-shaped structure
de which is a rub-
zed chamber that
s so fast you're
shed against the
l like a fly on a
dshield. A small
stands on one
t tugging the
vitron operator's
ki sleeve, crying
t he lost a shoe in
re. The best de-
iption of the
nes' tan is that
y're somehow *sin-*
-ly tanned. I no-
e that many of
m have the low
w and prog-
hous jaw one as-
iates with fetal
hol syndrome. The carny operating the Scoot-
-bumper cars that are fast, savage, underinsu-
d, a sure trip to the chiropractor—has been
nped in the same position in the same chair
y time I've seen him, staring past the frantic cars
tearing up used ride-tickets with the vacant in-
sity of someone on a locked ward. I lean casu-
against his platform's railing so that my
lentials dangle and ask him in a neighborly way
he keeps from going out of his freaking mind
the boredom of his job. He turns his head
slowly, revealing a severe facial tic: "The fuck
talkin' 'bout?"

The same two carnies as before are at the Zip-
s controls, in the exact same clothes, looking
nto the full cars and elbowing each other. The
lway smells of machine oil and fried food,
oke and Cutter repellent and mall-bought
lescent perfume and ripe trash in the bee-



swarmed cans. The very Nearest-to-Death ride looks to be the Kamikaze, way down at the western end by the Zyklon roller coaster. Its neon sign has a skull with a headband and says "Kamikaze." It is a 70-foot pillar of white-painted iron with two 50-foot hammer-shaped arms hanging down, one on either side. The cars are at the ends of the arms, twelve-seaters enclosed in clear plastic. The arms swing ferociously around, as in 360 degrees, vertically, and in opposite directions, so that twice on every rotation it looks like your car is going to get smashed up against the other car, and you can see faces in the other car hurtling toward you, gray with fear and squishy with [illegible]. An eight-ticket, four-dollar waking nightmare.

Then I find the worst one. It wasn't even here yesterday. The Sky Coaster stands regally aloof at the Hollow's far western edge, just past the Uphill-Bowling-for-Dinnerware game, in a kind of grotto formed by trailers and dismantled machinery. It is a 175-foot construction crane, one of the really big [illegible] with a tank's traction belts instead of wheels, a canary-yellow cab, and a long proboscis of black steel, towering, canted upward at maybe 70 degrees. This is half the Sky Coaster. The other half is a 100-foot tower assembly of cross-hatched iron that's been erected about two football fields to the north of the crane. There's a folding table in front of the clothesline cordoning off the crane, and a line of people at the table. The woman taking their money is fiftyish and a compelling advertisement for sunscreen. Behind her on a vivid blue tarp are two meaty blond guys in Sky Coaster T-shirts helping the next customer strap himself into what looks like a combination straitjacket and utility belt, bristling with hooks and clips. From here the noise of the Hollow behind is both deafening and muffled. My media guide, sweated into the shape of my butt pocket, says, "If you thought bungee jumping was a thrill, wait until you soar high above the Fairgrounds on Sky Coaster. The rider is fastened securely into a full-body harness

that hoists them [sic] onto a tower and releases them to swing in a pendulum-like motion while taking in a spectacular view of the Fairgrounds below." The signs at the folding table are more telling: "$40.00. AMEX Visa MC. No Refunds. No Stopping Halt Way U'p." The two guys are leading the customer up the stairs of a rolling platform maybe ten feet high. One guy is at each elbow, and I realize they're helping hold the customer up. Who would pay $40 for an experience requiring you to be held up as you walk toward it? There's also something off about the customer, odd. He's wearing tinted aviator glasses. No one in the rural Midwest wears aviator glasses, tinted or otherwise. Then I see what it really is. He's wearing $400 Banfi loafers. Without socks. This guy, now lying prone on the platform below the crane, is *from the East Coast*. He's a ringer. I almost want to shout it. A woman is on the blue tarp, already in harness, wobbly-kneed, waiting her turn. A steel cable descends from the tip of the crane's proboscis, on its end a fist-sized clip. Another cable leads from the crane's cab to the tower, up through ring-tipped pitons all up the tower's side, and over a pulley at its top, another big clip on the end. One of the guys waves the tower's cable down and brings it over to the platform. The clips of both cables are attached to the back of the East Coast guy's harness, fastened and locked. The guy is trying to look around behind him to see what-all's attached as the two big blonds leave the platform. Another blond man in the yellow cab throws a lever, and the tower's cable pulls tight in the grass and up the tower's side and down. The crane's cable stays slack as the guy is lifted into the air by the tower's cable. The harness covers his shorts and top, so he looks babe-naked as he rises. The one cable sings with tension as the East Coaster is pulled slowly to the top of the tower. He's still stomach-down, limbs wriggling. At a certain height he starts to look like livestock in a sling. You can tell he's trying to swallow until his face gets too small to see. Finally he's all the way up at the top of the tower, his ass against the pulley, trying not to writhe.

I can barely take notes. They cruelly leave him up there a while, slung, a smile of slack cable between him and the crane's tip. I am constructing a mental list of the personal violations I would undergo before I'd let anyone haul me ass-first to a great height and swing me like high-altitude beef. One of the blond guys has a bullhorn and he's playing to the crowd's suspense, calling up to the slung East Coaster: "Are. You. *Ready*." The East Coaster's response noises are more bovine than human. His tinted aviator glasses hang askew from just one ear; he doesn't bother to fix them. I can see what's going to happen. They're going to throw a lever and detach the tower-cable's clip, and the man in sockless Banfis will free-fall for what will seem forever, until the slack of the crane's cab is taken up and the line goes taut behind him and swings him way out over the grounds to the south, his upward arc almost as high as the crane's tip, and then back, and then forth, the man prone at the arc's bottom and seeming to stand on either side, swinging back and forth against a rare-meat sunset. And just as the cab man reaches for his lever and everyone inhales, I lose my nerve and disappear into the crowd.

9:15 P.M.

Walking aimlessly. Seas of fairgoing flesh plodding, elbowing, looking, still eating. They stand placidly in long lines. No East Coast games of Beat the Crowd. Midwesterners lack a certain public cunning. No one gets impatient. Don't the fairgoers mind the crowds, lines, noise? But the state fair is deliberately about the crowds and jostle, the noise and overload of sight and event. At last an overarching theory blooms inside my head: megalopolitan East Coasters' summer treats and breaks are literally "getaways," flights-from—from crowds, noise, heat, dirt, the stress of too many sensory choices. Hence the ecstatic escapes to glassy lakes, mountains, cabins, hikes in silent woods. Getting away from it all. They see more than enough stimulating people and sights Monday through Friday, thank you, stand in enough lines, elbow enough crowds. Neon skylines. Grotesques on public transport. Spectacles at every urban corner practically grab you by the lapels, commanding attention. The East Coast existential treat is escape from confines and stimuli—quiet rustic vistas that hold still, turn inward, turn away. Not so in the rural Midwest. Here you're pretty much away all the time. The land is big here—board-game flat, horizons in every direction. See how much farther apart the homes are, how broad the yards: compare with New York or Boston or Philly. Here a seat to yourself on all public transport, parks the size of airports, rush hour a three-beat pause at a stop sign. And the farms themselves are huge, silent, vacant: you can't see your neighbor. Thus the urge physically to commune, melt, become part of a crowd. To see something besides land and grass and corn and cable TV and your wife's face. Hence the sacredness out here of spectacle, public event, high-school football, Little League, parades, bingo, market day, fair. All very big deals, very deep down. Something in a Midwesterner sort of *actuates*, deep down, at a public event. The faces in the sea of faces are like the faces of children released from their rooms. Governor Edgar's state-spirit rhetoric at the ribbon-cutting rings true. The real spectacle that draws us here is us. ∎

MAKING KITSCH FROM AIDS

A disease with a gift shop of its own

By Daniel Harris

AIDS may be the first disease to have its own gift shop. Housed in the Workshop Building of the AIDS Memorial Quilt—the acres of fabric that commemorate the deaths of thousands of AIDS victims—Under One Roof is at the epicenter of the burgeoning industry of AIDS kitsch. Catering to an upscale clientele beaming with good intentions, the store, on Market Street in San Francisco's Castro District, peddles memento mori as shamelessly as tourist traps peddle souvenirs: "Cuddle Kit" teddy bears that sport tasteful red ribbons; Keith Haring tote bags; and T-shirts encircled with the words "We're Cookin' Up Love for People With AIDS." The boutique also sells a unique line of AIDS-related sympathy cards, including one picturing a seductive man leaning inconsolably against a tombstone angel. Inside an unctuous caption that smacks of an undertaker's condolences reads: "I wonder at times why some are chosen to leave so soon. Then I remember who has left, and I know. God must have wanted them home because he missed them." One of the store's best-selling items is a macabre coffee-table book of the Quilt itself, lavishly illustrated and presumably meant for bored guests to casually thumb through while ignoring the presentation of death as political knickknack.



Although Under One Roof donates its profits to a variety of AIDS-relief organizations, commercial businesses have not hesitated to wrap their products in the shroud of AIDS to promote their own merchandise. Benetton, in the early 1990s, placed in glossy magazines an ad that featured a skeletal male figure, obviously dying of AIDS. Stretched out in a hospital bed, beneath a print of Jesus Christ, he is attended by a sobbing father, who clutches him like a rag doll, and a grief-stricken mother, who sits crumpled in despair. In the ad's left-hand corner several words sit quietly in mourning, like unbidden guests maintaining respectful silence in the company of the family's anguish; they read, "United Colors of Benetton . . . For the nearest Benetton store location call 1-800-535-4491."

AIDS kitsch now appears in mind-numbing variety: as rap songs and safe-sex brochures, as the panel in the Quilt representing an enor-

Daniel Harris is a writer living in San Francisco. His essay "The Cute and the Anti-Cute" appeared in the July 1993 issue of Harper's Magazine.



mous airmail envelope addressed to "A Better Place," and as André Durand's painting *Votive Offering*, which depicts an ethereal Princess Di, amid saints and bathed in celestial light, placing her hands on an emaciated AIDS patient while dying men in surrounding hospital beds strain at their dripping IVs as if pleading to touch the hem of her skirt. AIDS has been so thoroughly sentimentalized that it inspires such publicity stunts as Elton John flying Ryan White to Disneyland or Miss America haunting AIDS wards, where she consoles dozens of



masterminded by an expensive breed of ch
ity-ball impresario. The events provide celeb
ties on the order of Marky Mark, Madonn
and Liza Minnelli with venues to shore up th
credentials for tolerance or bolster their flaggi
careers.

Although terminal illnesses have often be
sentimentalized—who can forget *Love Story*
Brian's Song?—the AIDS epidemic in partic
lar encourages the production of kitsch, inv
ing the abuse of activists, yellow journalis
New Age healers, pop psychologists, holis
chiropractors, and Hollywood producers. Ma
ufacturers of kitsch use gaudy cosmetics a
stagy lighting to make the pathetic more p
thetic, the sad sadder, transforming AIDS i
to a trite melodrama, a cozy bedtime sto
narrated in a teary singsong for the Americ
public.

The proliferation of AIDS kitsch can
linked to the unusual conditions under which
tivists were initially forced to raise money for
search, treatment, and education. Given t
minimal federal response to the disease in t
1980s and the public's hostility to the epide
ic's first casualties—homosexuals and IV dr
users—activists used a barrage of cheap ima
specifically designed to elicit pity in order
persuade the private sector to bear the financ
burden. The epidemic was sold to the public, li
the red-ribbon paperweights and ruby brooch
sold at Under One Roof. The marketing ca
paign has proved highly successful; last year t
Gay Men's Health Crisis and the Americ
Foundation for AIDS Research, two of the la
er AIDS organizations, together raised mo
than $45 million.

The propaganda surrounding AIDS has e

MANUFACTURERS OF KITSCH USE GAUDY COSMETICS AND STAGY LIGHTING TO MAKE THE PATHETIC MORE PATHETIC, THE SAD SADDER, TRANSFORMING AIDS INTO A TRITE MELODRAMA FOR THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

victims like a beauty among lepers. Whoopi Goldberg has turned up at displays of the Quilt pushing around a man in a wheelchair, an image that serves as the allegorical emblem of the kitschification of AIDS; just as politicians dandle babies, so celebrities use patients in wheelchairs as props for photo opportunities that dramatize their generosity and humanitarianism. There now exists an entire social circuit of well-advertised benefits—like the dusk-to-dawn dance-a-thons held by New York

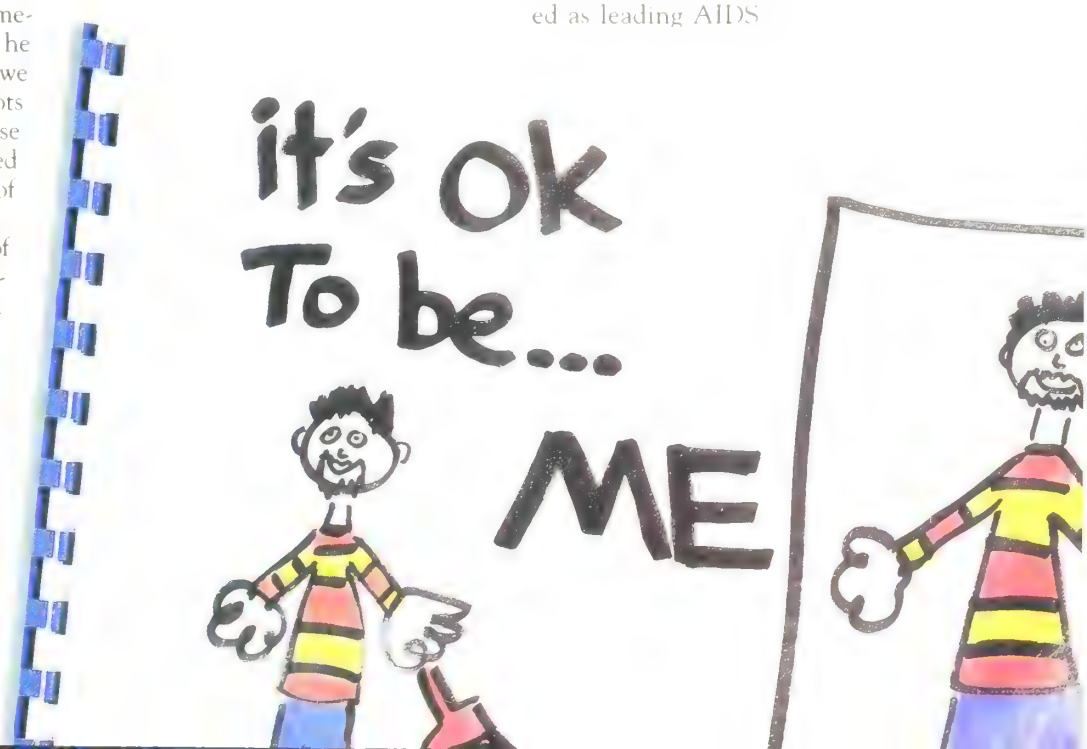
braced kitsch precisely because of the means
which the disease is transmitted. Because AI
has ravaged communities of people toward wh
Americans have shown little compassion, t
marketing of the AIDS "product" has involv
considerable ingenuity, including a full-scale
vision of the image of AIDS sufferers. Unlike l
controversial illnesses, like multiple sclerosis
leukemia, AIDS is vulnerable to kitsch in p
because of the urgent need to render the vict
innocent. In order to thwart the demonizati
of gay men, activists have attempted to conce

gal practices that the public at large finds
cceptable behind a counter-iconography that
the unfortunate side effect of filling the art
writings about AIDS with implausible car-
ures of the victim as a beseeching poster
d. The infantilization of the epidemic's vic-
s has come to play an increasingly impor-
role in AIDS propaganda, whether as the
fting tendentiousness of a coloring book en-
d *It's OK to Be . . . Me: A Cool Book About*
and Being HIV+ or as the mawkishness of the
gs of HIV-positive children on the album
wer the Call, where piping choruses of qua-
ng sopranos recite such plaintive lines as
e need love/We need compassion to live/
We've got hugs/We've got kisses to
give."

Among mainstream magazines, *People* has
onded most strongly to the imperative to
ply sanitized portraits of AIDS victims in
name of fostering an atmosphere of toler-
e and understanding. The magazine played
votal role in the beatification of Ryan White,
om its editors transformed into a living Hall-
k card, a modern version of Dickens's Tiny
n wasting away on the hearth, racked by
ls and a hacking cough. *People*'s bathetic
ounts included tear-jerking scenes of moth-
and son kneeling in bedside prayer, and
med to relish the gruesome decay of his frail
ly, which was described in prurient detail,
n his dainty feet in "huge, furry 'Bigfoot'
pers" to "his tiny blue fingers," which he
stantly warmed over the coils of his moth-
electric stove. White appeared in *People*'s fre-
nt profiles as an anachronistic piece of
toriana, a poetic wraith who enjoyed wan-
ing among the tombstones of
future burial place, the ceme-
in Cicero, Indiana, which he
ferred hands down—or so we
e told—to the cheerless plots
Kokomo, the home of those
picable bigots who railroaded
from their ranks because of
disease.

Almost from the inception of
epidemic, AIDS propagan-
s have found themselves in a
uliar moral bind. On the one
nd, they attempt to elicit
mpassion by portraying the
ims of the disease as seraph-
nnocents, as Sylvia Gol-
ub does in her memoir,
Conditional Love, when, af-
returning to Florida from
son's funeral, she imag-
that she sees him soaring
like an angel outside of the window of the plane,
waving his hand and saying, "Hi Mom! Hi Dad!
Don't Worry! Be Happy!" At the same time, the
epidemic's salesmen must avoid portraying HIV-
positive people as bedridden invalids unable to
fight for their own interests. Those who die are of-
ten embalmed in their obituaries in heroic clichés:
"foot soldiers in the war against AIDS" who die
after "beautiful battles" and "long and courageous
struggles," exhibiting "tenacious spirit" and a
"brave refusal to surrender." The representation of
the AIDS victim thus oscillates between two ex-
tremes of stylization: the childish image of the
guiltless martyr clutching his teddy bear and warm-
ing "his tiny blue fingers," and the "empowered"
image of the stouthearted hero whose gutsy
brinkmanship in the face of death is held up as a
model of unshakable resolve and pitiless opti-
mism—a punitively high standard of behavior,
it should be noted, for people suffering
from a deadly disease.

If the propaganda of AIDS activists targets
the housewife in Topeka, another variety of
kitsch addresses the AIDS victim himself. It is
he who buys the distinct and highly "niched"
line of the AIDS product sold by marketers ex-
ploiting not the lucrative emotion of pity but the
more profitable one of panic. Taking advan-
tage of the desperation of people grasping at
straws, New Age healers and human-potential
gurus have rushed to fill the void created by
the failure of traditional medicine to resolve
every health crisis it encounters. AIDS has been
overrun with kitsch also because it has breathed
new life into moribund New Age fads. Chan-
nelers now serve as conduits for the pro-
nouncements of ancient "Beings of Disincarnate
Intelligence," who, in certain circles, are tout-
ed as leading AIDS





experts. Kevin Ryerson, for instance, is a "fully accredited" clairvoyant who channels a spirit known simply as Spirit, a sagacious entity who advises victims of the epidemic to tune their unbalanced chakras like musical instruments, using as a basis not " 'C' of the major scale, but 'B,' and to proceed up the scale from there to A flat [since] this pitch is closer to the 'A' of 438 vibrations per second, which is the note that is sounded if one strikes the sarcophagus in the King's Chamber of the Great Pyramid." Spirit also encourages AIDS sufferers to buy his friend's meditation tapes.

The loss of faith in conventional medicine has generated intense nostalgia for a pre-medical era of witch doctors and medicine men. Contemporary internists have been rejected and replaced by anachronistic figures decked out in the costumes of modern medievalism—magicians and alchemists who perform primitive rituals. One of the masterpieces of AIDS kitsch, the independent film *Men in Love*, is suffused with the longing for an Edenic world without science, a peaceful land of docile lotus-eaters where grieving Californians spurn traditional medicine for moonlit healing circles in Maui at which they don grass skirts, mutter incantations, and dance like savages around a bonfire.

Even more appalling is the mindless optimism of the self-help and human-potential movements. A bizarre dissonance occurs when the bleak prognosis for the victims of the disease collides with the indiscriminately happy-go-lucky, can-do attitudes of pop psychology's euphoric rhetoric, a dissonance perhaps best expressed in the testimonials by gay men with AIDS who deny the imminence of their death and even claim that the disease is, as one Bay Area patient put it in an interview in the *San Francisco Examiner*, "the most wonderful thing that ever happened in my life." This remarkable statement is echoed in a letter that a disciple of the reigning messiah of alternative medicin Louise Hay, wrote to an anthropomorphized i age of his disease:

> Dear AIDS
>
> For so long now I've been angry with you for ng part of my life. I feel like you have violated ence. The strongest emotion thus far in our re tionship has been anger."
>
> But now I choose to see you in a different lig I no longer hate you or feel angry with you. I alize now that you have become a positive force my life. You are a messenger who has brought a new understanding of life and myself. So I thi you, forgive you, and release you.
>
> Never before has anyone given me such great o portunity. . . . Because of you I have learned to l myself, and as a result I love and am loved by o ers. I am now in touch with parts of my being th I never knew existed. I have grown spiritually a intellectually since your arrival. . . . So again I tha you for giving me this opportunity to have insig into my life. How could I not forgive you, when many positive experiences have come from yo visit.
>
> But you have also led me to the realization th you have no power over me. I am the power in world. . . .
>
> With l
> I

In the self-help treatment guide *Immune Po er*, Dr. Jon D. Kaiser even advises his clients open up a regular correspondence with th virus. The patient, playing the role of the disea writes back like a pen pal or a well-bred guest thank its "hosts" "for sharing your feelings w me" "[that I] have overstayed [my] welcom adding that "I appreciate your thoughts and I not offended by the bluntness of your attitude ward me."

The banal euphemisms of pop psycholo have turned much of the self-help literature the epidemic into black comedy. Prophets li Hay and Kaiser attempt to incorporate th clients' illnesses into their upbeat programs self-actualization, as if the disease were simply a other hurdle to be surmounted in the quest personal growth. The demagogues of what mig be called the "empathy industry" promote t notion that we have full control of our liv that there is no problem so overwhelming th a simple act of self-assertion will not ultima ly lead to its resolution. The modern therap tic paradigms from which AIDS profiteers der their methods thus fail spectacularly to a knowledge tragedy and refuse to admit that an thing could evade the resourcefuln of the human will.

Given the abundance of kitsch generat from AIDS profiteering, it is surprising that t genre in which you might expect to find kits

ums relatively free of it. Fiction. It is not such authors as David Feinberg, Edmund te, Paul Monette, Robert Ferro, John Weir, Christopher Coe are (or were) actually all good; they simply avoid being all that *bad*. ir novels present few overwrought scenes of ul bedside farewells, shocking expulsions eartless parents of their ailing children, or h of the melodrama that so appeals to Amer- tastes. (Not incidentally, perhaps, these els have never hit the best-seller list.) In it is precisely the fear of sentimentality

suspense, devise artful foreshadowings, and evoke menacing atmospheres. The mainstream media have found these methods so profitable that their impulse to novelize the disease has prevailed over their obligation to document it.

Nowhere do the kitschifying effects of narrative appear more clearly than in the HBO movie version of *And the Band Played On*, itself a tissue of reconstructed dialogues and internal soliloquies. Common sense might suggest that the book should have been interpreted as documentary, with footage from newsreels and interviews;

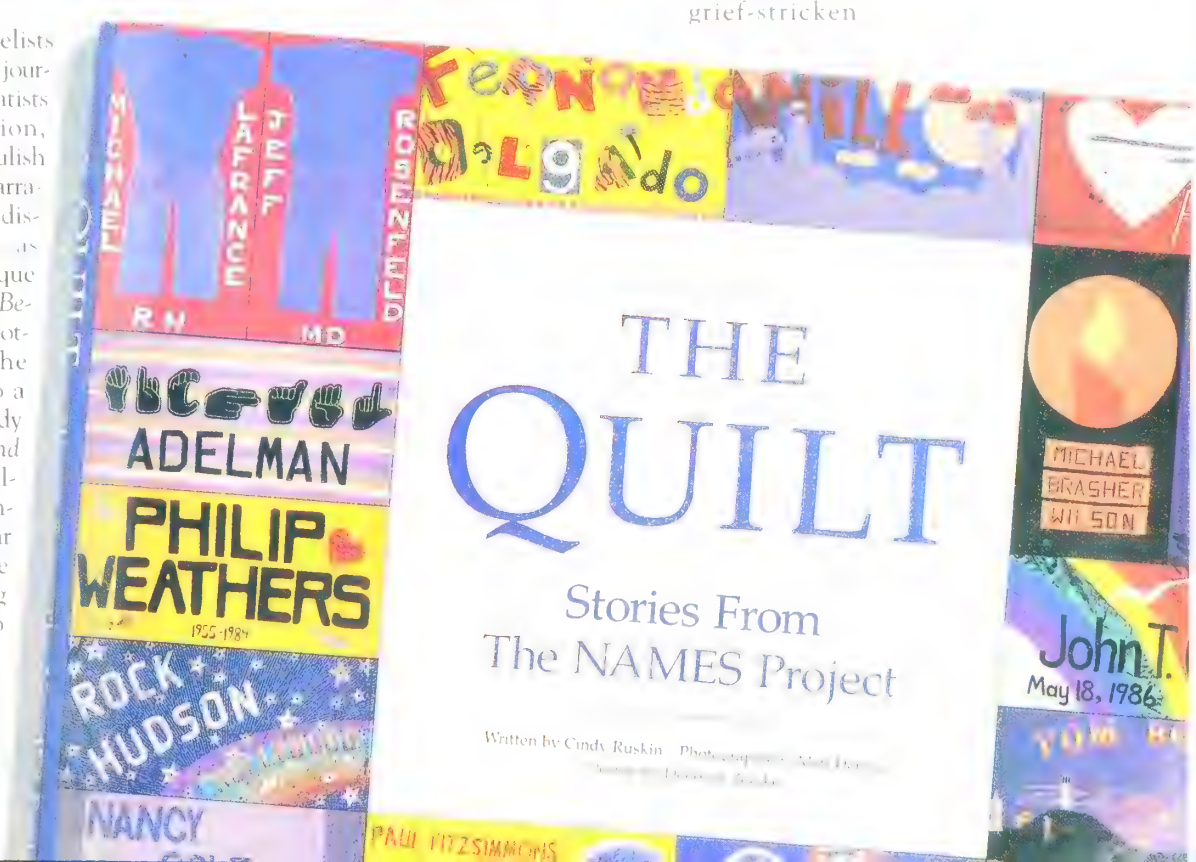
THE NARRATIVE METHODS OF REPORTING AIDS—INVENTING SCENES, MANUFACTURING SUSPENSE—ARE SO PROFITABLE THAT THE MEDIA'S IMPULSE TO NOVELIZE THE DISEASE PREVAILS OVER THEIR OBLIGATION TO DOCUMENT IT

defines the fiction about AIDS and makes literary depictions of the epidemic case studn authorial restraint. Fiction writers' fear of ch is so strong that contemporary literature many ways immune to the tragedy of AIDS, ulated against it by a tendency toward flip- ironizing, like the compulsive jocularity d in John Weir's *The Irreversible Decline of e Socket*. Here, the dying protagonist struts poses through his illness, embracing the- cal attitudes he self-consciously plagiarizes Hollywood B films, like the addled femme e in Manuel Puig's *Kiss e Spider Woman*.

Where AIDS novelists to tread, however, jour- sts and docudramatists without hesitation, onstrating a ghoulish nation for the narra- richness of the dis- In accounts as rent as Dominique erre's "epic story" *Be- Love*, an absurd pot- er that turns the ory of AIDS into a opera, and Randy ts's *And the Band d On*, the journal- about the epidem- paradoxically far fictional than the on. The reporting s on the need to nt scenes, re-cre- internal mono- es, manufacture

instead, Hollywood created a fictional reenactment with an all-star cast headed by a soulful Richard Gere, an earthy Lily Tomlin, and a brooding Ian McKellen—slow death as entertainment.

While telling the story of the epidemic, journalists have often given readers an improbably intimate point of view. Assuming the perspective of an omniscient third-person narrator, reporters minimize our awareness of the necessarily secondhand nature of the facts they convey, allowing us to imagine that we are viewing the scene through a hidden camera. Thus, for instance, we are literally in the hospital when the grief-stricken



[illegible] *Home Journal* article "AIDS: A Marriage: What Every Woman Knew" paces frantically up and down the [illegible] corridor keeping "a silent and solitary vigil" before her dying husband's quarantined room. Likewise, we become eavesdroppers in the bile home—indeed, in the very *mind*—of the victim of the bigoted Southern town portrayed in *U.S. News & World Report*'s article "AIDS: When Fear Takes Charge," who prays as a teenager for God to make him straight ("'Please, dear Lord, change me,' Steve prayed nightly, as he lay in bed as a youth in his father's trailer").

Where the media have sold the epidemic as lurid melodrama, as medical theme park, or as morbid peep show, the organizers of the AIDS Memorial Quilt have sold their product as a nostalgic piece of folk art. The Quilt, a patchwork of cloth that can be visited like a grave site or a war memorial, is an extraordinary and often moving device that is in part intended to manipulate the way the disease is judged by the uninfected. Just as activists attempt to make the disease appealing to the consumer by counteracting homophobic stereotypes with desexed images of AIDS martyrs, so the Quilt wraps the epidemic's infantilized victims in what amounts to a macabre security blanket, an ideological shield. According to Cleve Jones, the Quilt's founder, this embodiment of "pure good," which emanates "coziness, humanity and warmth," "touch[es] people's hearts with something that is so pure and so clear in its message" that it creates an outpouring of compassion that helps fight discrimination.

We are meant to discuss this sacrosanct artifact in hushed tones of reverence, but in fact the Quilt is the sublime expression of AIDS kitsch. It evokes nostalgia for a simpler, more innocent time, a pastoral world of buggies and butter churns—an America that never existed. "From our earliest days," the jacket copy of the coffee-table book *The Quilt* proclaims, "the quilt and the quilting bee have been part of American life." Jones, his "eyes glisten[ing] with both sadness and pride," with the "tears that flow constantly," describes the Quilt—whose panels are individually stitched by the friends and families of those who have died of AIDS—as "a way for survivors to work through their grief in a positive, creati way." "We sew and ... cry and ... hold each othe a Quilt volunteer explains. Thus the merchan of the disease place its primary commemorati monument within the context of a wholeson tradition of American history, to create a ki of *faux* antique, the memento of an apocryph Arcadia. In this mythic, prelapsarian Americ AIDS sheds its stigma as the scourge of depra homosexuals and is endowed instead with the i tegrity of our industrious Pilgrim forefathe Nostalgia, the longing for a legendary, sma town America, is a fundamental component AIDS kitsch, and the selling of the Quilt obe one of the primary rules of marketing: the r manticization of handmade goods. The Qu effectively exudes an aura of the homestead, kindly old grannies in bifocals and bonne stitching up a storm, plying a trade that hat back to the naive primitivism of *Americ Gothic*.

The images of folk art also provide a substitu for the iconography of the Christian Church. A most from the onset of the disease, AIDS prop gandists have urged us to vent our pent-up gr as part of a regular program of mental hygiene, well as a means of publicizing the tragedy a rallying new supporters to the cause. Therapis members of the activist group ACT UP, and o

THE QUILT IS THE SUBLIME EXPRESSION OF AIDS KITSCH. IT EVOKES A NOSTALGIA FOR A SIMPLER, MORE INNOCENT TIME, A PASTORAL WORLD OF BUGGIES AND BUTTER CHURNS—AN AMERICA THAT DOESN'T EXIST

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er leaders of the gay community now teach that the suppression of sorrow and rage is both p chologically damaging and politically retrogra at once interfering with the "grieving proce and encouraging passivity and resignation.

Rather than using venerable Christian ce monies to express sorrow, the gay commun has sought in the marketplace new models for s *ular* services. The new public rituals for coll tive mourning—healing circles, die-ins, and t Quilt—more closely resemble sensitivity gro or counseling sessions than wakes or masses. place of the church, which many gay peo rightly perceive as a bastion of homophobia, have invented the Quilt, which appeases both distrust of religion and our adoration of thera But the Quilt is cheapened by nostalgia, t homesickness of an industrial culture for an ag ian one, and our sacramental shroud reeks no ecclesiastical incense but of the cloying in thenticity of a shopping mall's Yarn Barn.

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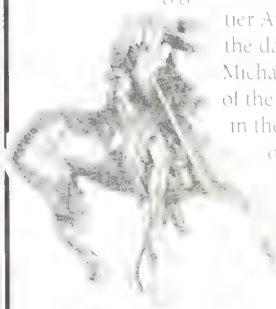
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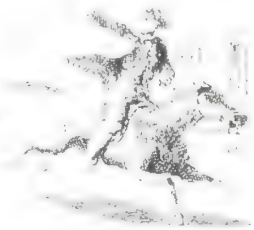
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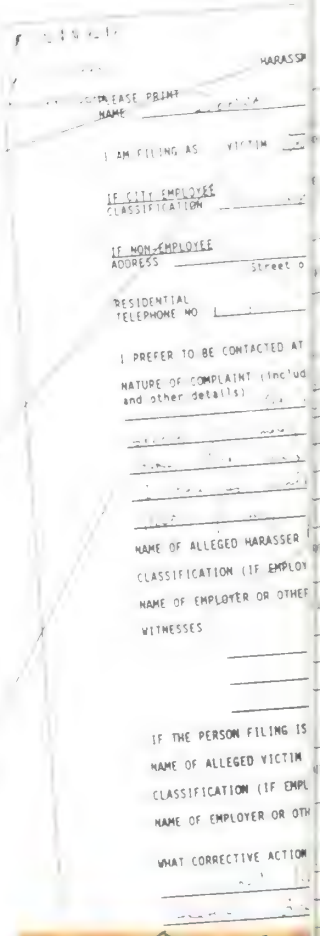
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THE FINE ART OF S

Aphrodite gets her

[illegible] the city of Menlo Park, Califor[illegible] discriminate to or harassment in the work[illegible] Vincent, a twenty-nine-year-old [illegible] exhibition in Menlo Park's City Hall of woodcuts by Brazilian artist Zoravia Bettiol constituted sexual harassment because it disrupted her work environment. "The new [illegible] has several (3 or more) drawings of women who are nude from the waist up and one that is a full nude," she wrote. "I have to walk through the hallways each day as part of my work and would prefer not to have to see this type of 'Art.'" One day after the complaint was filed, city officials removed two woodcuts: portraits of Aphrodite (below, right) and "Luxuria." The issue raised by Vincent's complaint is being faced by universities and municipalities across the country: Can a work of art be sexually harassing? In more than a dozen recent cases, allegations of sexual harassment have been used to force the removal of artwork from classrooms, municipal buildings, and public art galleries.



How can one be a "victim" of art? In 1558, when Pope Paul IV viewed the male genitalia painted by Michelangelo on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, he insisted that they be brushed over with flowing draperies (only recently removed after more than 400 years). When Donna Vincent, a Seventh-Day Adventist, first objected to the naked female torsos, the Menlo Park Arts Commission ordered that the offending parts be covered. Canary yellow Post-It notes fluttered from Aphrodite's breasts overnight before the woodcuts were removed from the exhibit altogether. The artist, who was an outspoken proponent of artistic freedom under Brazil's former military government, brought a legal complaint against the city for violating her First Amendment rights. The case is pending.

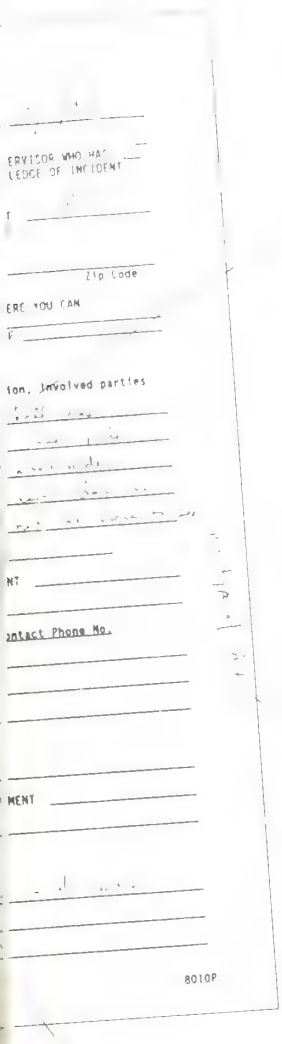
Vincent filed her complaint under the city's anti-harassment and non-discrimination policy, passed in 1992, which prohibits "posters, notices, bulletins, cartoons or drawings . . . which are offensive or derogatory to a reasonable person on the basis of race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, medical condition, disabilities . . . marital status, sex, age or sexual orientation, and which may create a disruption in the workplace." A 1986 Supreme Court decision held that employers could be found liable for allowing a "hostile work environment" to exist, giving employers a powerful economic incentive to protect themselves from liability. In April, the U.S. Navy released guidelines strongly cautioning its personnel against the display of "suggestive posters or calendars" and expressly forbidding the exhibition of "sexually explicit pictures." Vincent's claim pushes the concept even further, asserting that a work of art standing on its own, and not a part of any larger pattern of discrimination, can be deemed sexually harassing.



Mark Schapiro is a writer living in New York City.

AL HARASSMENT

by Mark Schapiro



Vincent lists no witnesses who shared her objection to the artwork in question. Thus, one complainant was in the position to establish the aesthetic criteria for the entire City Hall workforce of 120 employees and countless local residents who walk through the hallways each day on business. Similarly, at the Langley, Virginia, headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency last year several agency employees complained that paintings in an exhibition by a Cuban-American artist, Carmen Trujillo, were offensive and potentially sexually harassing. The works contained impressionistic images of female nudity (detail, right). The agency canceled the exhibition.



What is "art" to Zoravia Bettiol is harassment to Donna Vincent. Such a standard places Bettiol in the company of at least one of the Old Masters, Goya, whose masterpiece *Naked Maja* was the target of a sexual-harassment complaint in 1991 by a Pennsylvania college professor, who claimed that the recumbent courtesan inspired sexual fantasies among her male students and thereby rendered her classroom a hostile working environment. The painting was moved to a student lounge. But the outbreak of visual sexual harassment is by no means gender specific: a male janitor working in the Oglesby, Illinois, post office complained last year that naked Native Americans in a mural (detail, right) displayed in the lobby were mooning over him as he worked and that this violated his civil rights. The mural, commissioned by the WPA in 1941, was covered, then briefly uncovered on orders from Washington, then covered again by district postal officials. It is now, for the moment, uncovered.



As art itself becomes the touchstone for larger political, cultural, and social conflicts, the search for more "tasteful" art can lead in only one direction. Hanging over the head of every arts official in the country is the specter of Cobb County, Georgia, which simply eliminated all local arts funding after it was prevented from defunding homoerotic art and theater. Curators across the country report a growing unwillingness to go out on a limb with potentially controversial art, and artists suffer the intangible effects of self-censorship. Back in Menlo Park, City Attorney William McClure said that the city hopes to display only "pleasant, non-controversial art" in its public spaces—"landscapes, holiday pictures, children's handiwork."

THE SISTERHOOD OF NIGHT

By Steven Millhauser



I

What We Know

[illegible] accusation and hysterical rumor [illegible] roughly replaced the careful assessment of evidence that impartiality itself seems of the [illegible] We know that the girls are between twelve and fifteen years old. We know that they travel [illegible] smaller and larger bands, ranging from two to nine, have occasionally been sighted. We know that they leave and return only at night. We know that they seek dark and secret places, such as abandoned houses, church cellars, graveyards, and the woods at the north end of town. We know, or believe we know, that they have taken a vow of silence.

What We Say

It is said that the girls remove their shirts and dance wild dances under the summer moon. It is said that the girls paint their breasts with snakes and [illegible] They [illegible] selves by brushing their breasts against the breasts of other girls, it is said. We hear that the girls drink the warm blood of murdered animals. People say that the girls engage in witchcraft, in unnatural sexual acts, in torture, in black magic, in disgusting acts of desecration. Older girls, it is said, lure younger girls into the sisterhood and corrupt them. Rumor has it that the girls are instructed to carry weapons: pins, scissors, jackknives, needles, kitchen knives. It is said that the girls have vowed to kill any member who attempts to leave the sisterhood. We have heard that the girls drink a whitish liquid that makes them fall into an [illegible]

The Confession of Emily Gehring

[illegible] reached us from time to time, but we paid little attention to them until the confession of thirteen-year-old Emily [illegible]

Town Reporter a disturbing l[illegible]ter. In it she stated that on M[illegible] 14, at 4:00 P.M., she had b[illegible] contacted on the playgroun[illegible] David Johnson Junior High [illegible] Mary Warren, a high-sch[illegible] sophomore who sometir[illegible] played basketball with [illegible] younger girls. Mary War[illegible] slipped into her hand a sm[illegible] piece of white paper, folde[illegible] half. When Emily Gehr[illegible] opened it, she saw that on[illegible] the inner sides was entir[illegible] black. Emily felt excited [illegible] frightened, for this was the [illegible] of the Sisterhood of Night [illegible] obscure, impenetrable secret[illegible] ciety much discussed on the playgrou[illegible] at the lockers, and in the bathroom[illegible] David Johnson Junior High. She [illegible] told to speak to no one and to app[illegible] alone at midnight in the parking lot [illegible] hind the Presbyterian church. Er[illegible] Gehring stated that when she appe[illegible] at the parking lot she at first saw no [illegible] but was then met by three girls, [illegible] had slipped out of hiding places: M[illegible] Warren, Isabel Robbins, and La[illegible] Lindberg. The girls led her through [illegible] church parking lot, along quiet ro[illegible] and through backyards to the woo[illegible] the north end of town, where three [illegible] er girls met them: Catherine Ander[illegible] Hilda Meyer, and Lavinia Hall. M[illegible] Warren then asked her whether [illegible] liked boys. When she said yes, the [illegible] mocked her and laughed at her, as i[illegible] had said something stupid. Mary W[illegible] ren then asked her to remove her s[illegible]

n she refused, the girls threatened
her to a tree and stick pins in her
emoved her shirt and the girls all
ed her breasts, touching them and
g them. She then was invited to
the breasts of the other girls, when
efused, they seized her hands and
d her to touch them. Some of the
lso touched her "in another place."
Warren warned her that if she
of this to anyone, she would be
shed, at this point Mary Warren
wed a bone-handled kitchen knife
Gehring stated that the girls met
night, at different times and places,
ups of five or six or seven; and she
er stated that members of the group
continually changing, and that she
old about other groups meeting in
places. The girls always removed
shirts, fondled and kissed one an-
r, sometimes painted their breasts
snakes and strange symbols, and
ited others into their secret prac-
Emily Gehring remembered, and
l, the names of sixteen girls. By the
f May, according to her statement,
could no longer live with herself,
wo days later she delivered to the
Reporter her written confession
rged the town authorities to stop
sisterhood, which was spreading
g the girls of David Johnson Junior
like a disease.

The Defense of Mary Warren

response to these charges, which
ked our community, Mary War-
ssued a detailed rebuttal that ap-
ed in the *Town Reporter* on June 4.
began by saying that absolute se-
was the rule of the sisterhood
hat any statement whatever about
group by one of its members was
shed by instant expulsion. Never-
ss, the attack by Emily Gehring
onvinced her that she must speak
n defense of the sisterhood even at
xpense of banishment. She ac-
wledged that she had contacted
Gehring, who had been selected
itiation by a group of "searchers,"
n she refused to name; that she
passed Emily Gehring the black-
piece of paper, and had met her,
e presence of two other members,
n she also refused to name, at the
of the Presbyterian church at mid-
and led her into the woods. From
point on, Mary Warren stated, Emily Gehring's report was utterly false, a vicious, hurtful attack the motive for which was all too clear. For Emily Gehring had failed to report that on May 30 she had been expelled from the sisterhood for *violating the vow of silence*. It is not clear from Mary Warren's defense precisely what the vow of silence demanded of a member or how Emily Gehring violated it, but it is clear, according to her statement, that Emily Gehring was deeply upset by the order of expulsion and threatened to take revenge. Mary Warren then repeated that Emily Gehring's confession was nothing but vicious lies, and she stated that she refused, by reason of her vow, to discuss the sisterhood in any way, except to say that it was a noble, pure society dedicated to silence. She feared that the slander of Emily Gehring had caused harm, and she ended with a passionate plea to the parents of our town to disregard the lies of Emily Gehring and trust their daughters.

Night Worries

We were of two minds concerning Mary Warren's denial, for if on the one hand we were impressed by her intelligence and grateful to her for giving us grounds for doubting the confession of Emily Gehring, on the other hand her silence about the sisterhood raised doubts of a different kind and tended to undermine the case she was attempting to make. We noted with concern the existence of the group of "searchers," the ritual of the blackened paper, the secret meeting in the woods, the rigorous vow; we wondered, if the girls were innocent, what it was they vowed not to reveal. It was at this time that we began to wake in the night and to ask ourselves how we had failed our daughters. Now reports first began to circulate of bands of girls roaming the night, crossing backyards, moving in the dark; and we began to hear rumors of strange cries, of painted breasts, of wild dances under the summer moon.

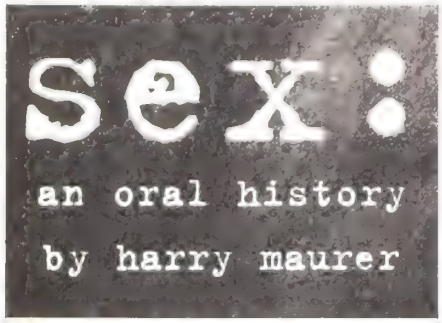
The Death of Lavinia Hall

The daughters of our town, many of whom we suspected of being secret members of the sisterhood, now began to seem moody, restless, and irritable. They refused to speak to us, shut themselves in their rooms, demanded that we leave them alone. These moody silences we took as proof of their membership; we hovered, we spied, we breathed down their necks. It was in this tense and oppressive atmosphere that on June 12, ten days after the confession of Emily Gehring, fourteen-year-old Lavinia Hall climbed the two flights of stairs to the guest room in her parents' attic and there, lying down on a puffy comforter sewn by her grandmother, swallowed twenty of her father's sleeping pills. She left no note, but we knew that Lavinia Hall had been named by Emily Gehring as a member of the sisterhood and a participant in their erotic rites. Later it was learned from her parents that the Gehring confession had devastated Lavinia, a quiet, scholarly girl who practiced Czerny exercises and Mozart sonatas on the piano two hours every day after school, kept a diary, and stayed up late at night reading fantasy trilogies with twisting vines on the covers. After Emily Gehring's confession, Lavinia had refused to answer any questions about the sisterhood and had begun to act strangely, shutting herself up in her room for hours at a time and moving around the house restlessly at night. One night at two in the morning her parents heard footsteps in the attic above their bedroom. They climbed the creaking wooden stairs and found Lavinia sitting in her pale blue pajamas on the moon-striped floor in front of her old dollhouse, which had been moved into the attic at the end of the sixth grade and still contained eight roomfuls of miniature furniture. Lavinia sat with her arms hugging her raised knees. Her feet were bare. She was strangely still. Her mother remembered one detail: the long forearm, revealed by the pulled-back pajama sleeve. In the dollhouse three little dolls, thick with dust, sat stiffly in the moonlit living room: the child on the cobwebbed couch, the mother on the rocker, the father on the armchair with tiny lace doilies. The parents blamed themselves for not recognizing the seriousness of their daughter's condition, and they condemned the sisterhood as a band of murderers.

The Second Confession of Emily Gehring

Scarcely had we begun to suffer the news of the death of Lavinia Hall when

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VIKING

Emily Gehring released to the *Town Reporter* a second confession, which angered us and filled us with confusion. For in it she repudiated her earlier confession and, siding with Mary Warren against herself, accused herself of having fabricated the first confession in a spirit of revenge for her expulsion from the sisterhood. Emily Gehring now confessed that on the night of May 14 she had been led into the woods by Mary Warren and two other girls, as she had truthfully reported on June 2, but that "nothing at all" had happened there. Of her initiation she said only that it "consisted of silence"; for the next two weeks she had met nightly with small groups of the sisterhood, during which "not a single word" was uttered by anyone and "nothing at all" took place. On May 30 she was expelled from the sisterhood for violating her vow: she had spoken of the secret society to her friend Susannah Mason, who in turn had spoken to Bernice Thurman, not knowing that Bernice was a secret member of the sisterhood. Emily Gehring now claimed that she had regretted her false confession from the moment she had given it to the *Town Reporter*, but had been ashamed to admit that she had lied. The death of Lavinia Hall had shocked her into confessing the truth. She took upon herself the blame for Lavinia Hall's death, apologized to the grieving parents, and spoke fervently of the sisterhood as a pure, noble association that had given meaning to her life; and she looked forward to the day when the glorious sisterhood would spread from town to town and take over the world.

Response to the Second Confession

As might be expected, the second confession thoroughly damaged the credibility of Emily Gehring as a witness, but our doubts, which at first were directed at the confession of June 2, soon turned upon the second confession itself. We noted that Emily Gehring used the very words of Mary Warren to describe the sisterhood; and this coincidence led some of us to argue that Emily Gehring had been persuaded by Mary Warren to retract her confession and take upon herself all blame, in return for reinstatement in the sisterhood or for some other reward we could only guess at. Others noted with distaste the fervent turn at the end of the confession, and argued that if an Emily Gehring was not telling the truth, then the truth was both incomplete and disturbing. For in fact the girls were innocent of the original charges, then the nature of the sisterhood remained carefully hidden while at the same time its troubling power was revealed by the passion of Emily Gehring, who couldn't tear herself away. In this view the second confession, while seeming to absolve the sisterhood, to reveal its innocence, in fact demonstrated an even more frightening truth about the secret society and its tenacious grip on the girls, the terrible loyalty it exacted from them.

The Testimony of Dr. Robert Meyer

It was during this time of uncertainty and anxiety that new information appeared from an unexpected quarter. Dr. Robert Meyer, a dermatologist with an office on Broad Street, had been deeply disturbed when his daughter Hilda, was named by Emily Gehring in her confession of June 2. His daughter, he said, had called Emily Gehring a friend but had refused to speak of the sisterhood; after the first confession she became moody and irritable, and he could hear her pacing about at night. After three nights of terrible insomnia Robert Meyer made a fateful decision: he determined to follow his daughter and disrupt her lesbian experiments. At midnight on the fourth night he heard her footsteps creaking in the hall. He threw off his covers, slipped into sweat pants, sweatshirt, and running shoes, and followed her into the cool summer night. A block from the house she was met by two other girls, whom Meyer did not know. The three girls, wearing jeans, T-shirts, and nylon windbreakers tied around their waists, set off for the woods at the north end of town. Meyer, a deeply moral man, felt immense distaste and self-disgust as he pursued the three girls through the night, dodging behind trees like a spy in a late night TV movie and creeping through backyards past swing sets, badminton nets, and fat plastic baseball bats. It struck him that he was doing something at once unsavory and absurd. He did not know what he planned to do when he arrived at the woods, but

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The Optimum U.S. Population Size

The central issue is surely this: **At what size should we seek to stabilize U.S. population?** Unless we know in what direction we should be headed, how can we possibly devise sensible policies to get us there?

The size at which our population is eventually stabilized is supremely important because of the effect of sheer numbers of people on such vitally important national goals as a healthy environment, and a sustainable economy.

We believe these goals can best be achieved with a U.S. population in the range of 125 to 150 million, or about its size in the 1940s. This optimum size could be reached in about three to four generations if we do two things now that are well within our grasp.

How To Get There

1. **Reduce annual immigration to about 200,000** so that it is in rough balance with emigration (out-migration). Then, immigration will no longer contribute significantly to our population growth, as it does now.

2. **Lower our fertility rate** (the average number of children per woman) from the present 2.1 to around 1.5 and maintain it at that level for several decades. We believe that non-coercive financial incentives will be necessary in order to reach that goal.

If almost all women had no more than two children, our fertility rate would drop to around 1.5, because many women remain childless by choice, or choose to have not more than one child. **We promote the ideal of the two-child maximum family as the social norm, because that is the key to lowering our fertility.**

Incentives to Lower Fertility

NPG proposes these incentives to motivate parents to have no more than two children:

- Eliminate the present Federal income tax exemption for dependent children born after a specified date.
- Give a Federal income tax credit **only** to those parents who have not more than two children. Those with three or more would lose the credit entirely.
- Give an annual cash grant to low income parents who pay little or no income tax, and who have no more than two children. Those with three or more children would lose the cash grant entirely.

Two Vastly Different Paths Lie Before Us

With the reductions in immigration and fertility we advocate, our nation could start **now** on the path toward a sustainable, and prosperous, population of 125 to 150 million.

Without such a program, we are almost certain to continue our mindless, headlong rush down our current path. That path is leading us straight toward catastrophic population levels that can only devastate our environment, and produce universal poverty in a crowded, polluted nation.

If you agree that we need to work toward a smaller U.S. population, we need your support. **NPG is the only organization that calls for a smaller U.S. and world population, and for specific, realistic measures to achieve those goals.**

We are a nonprofit, national membership organization established in 1972. Contributions to NPG are tax deductible to the extent the law allows. To become a member, and receive our newsletter, plus all our current and future publications, please send us your check today.

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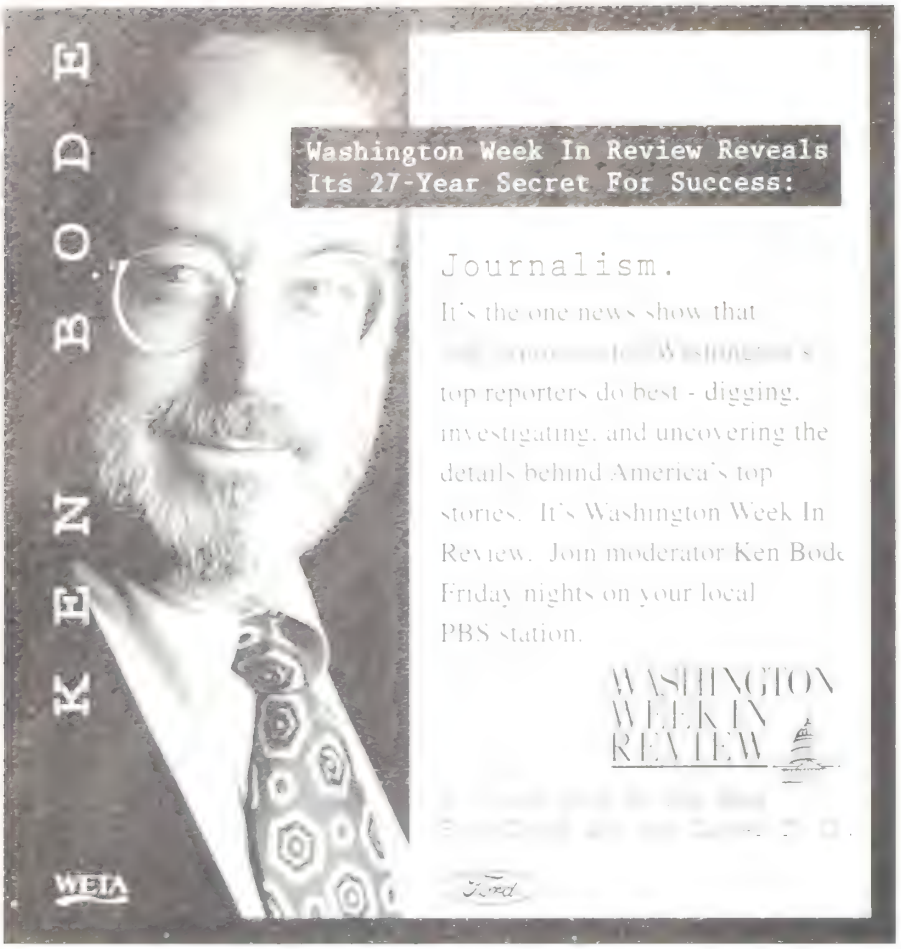
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ans in hushed forests. The girls cros
a stream and emerged in a small
lit clearing well protected by pines. F
other girls were already present in
clearing. Standing behind a thick
at a distance of some twenty feet fr
the group, Meyer experienced, in
dition to his self-revulsion, an inte

The seven girls did not speak, altho
they greeted one another with n

arranged plan, the girls formed a s
close circle and raised their arms
such a way that all their forear
crossed. After this silent sign the
separated and took up isolated p

lying with arms clasped behind
heads. Not a single word was ut
Nothing happened. After thirt
minutes by his watch, Meyer tur
and crept away.

Meyer's testimony, far from resolv
is into deeper contr
the sisterhood heaped scorn on Mey
report, although they disagreed ab

Some insisted that Meyer had inve
ed the whole thing in a crude effor
protect his daughter; others argued
clever Hilda Meyer had plotted
entire episode, cunningly leading
father to the woods in order to h
him witness a staged scene: The In
cent Maidens in Repose. Others poi
ed out that even if no deception
er or his daughter, the testimony wa
no sense decisive: Meyer, by his own
mission, did not remain during the
ture meeting, he observed the girls o
a single time, and he observed onl
single group of girls out of many grou
Was it not unlikely, people asked,
it not highly unlikely, that girls
tween the ages of twelve and fifte
would sneak out of their houses ni
after night, risking parental disappro

ver punishment, in order to meet
other girls to exclude [illegible]
mysterious places solely for the pur-
of doing nothing." That was not
simply to say that the girls were
ging in forbidden deeds, although
leeds could never be ruled out, but
ly to suggest that what they did do
med extraordinarily unknown. It
even possible that the girls, at the
time they were being observed by
rs, had engaged in secret practices
he had failed to recognize, per-
they had developed a system of
and signals that Meyer had not
able to read.

The Town

ght after night the members of the
t sisterhood set forth from their
and restful rooms, the rooms of
childhood, to seek out dark and
n places. Sometimes we see, or
we see, a group of them vanish-
nto the shadows of backyards lit
tchen windows, or gliding out of
along a dark front lawn. Disdain-
our wishes, indifferent to our un

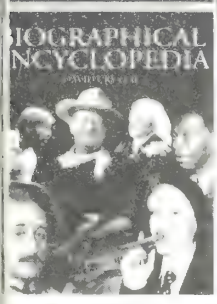
happiness, they seem a race apart, wild
creatures of the night with [illegible]
hair and eyes of fire, until we recall with
a start that they are our daughters. What
shall we do with our daughters? Un-
easily we keep watch over them, fear-
ful of provoking them to open defiance.
Some say that we should lock our
daughters in their rooms at night, that
we should place bars on their windows,
that we should punish them harshly
over and over again, until they bow
their heads in obedience. One reading is
said to tie his thirteen-year-old daugh-
ter to her bed at night with clothesline
rope and to reward her chaste nights with blows
from a leather belt. Most deplore such
measures but remain uncertain what to
do. Meanwhile our daughters are rest-
less, night after night [illegible]
seem to disappear into dark places be-
yond the reach of streetlights. Their
boredom is growing. There are reports of
girls moving across the parking lot be-
hind the Lamberty rink, meeting in the
small woods behind the high school tow-
ers, climbing from the cellars of
half-built houses, emerging from the

[illegible]
sunlight; and we who remain at home,
awake in the dark, seem to hear, like the
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
night.

[illegible]

Some [illegible] suggest that the girls are
[illegible]
witchcraft under the guidance of older
girls; there is talk of spells, potions,
a goat-haired figure, wild seizures and
abandons. Others say that the girls are
[illegible]
[illegible]
dicating themselves to her cold and pas-
sionate mysteries. Some say that the
[illegible]
dom and emptiness of middle-class
[illegible]

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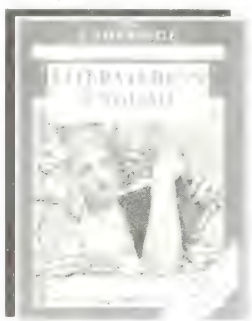
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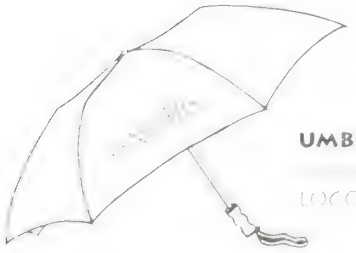




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exploration. Others see in this ex
nation a desire to denigrate won
tellectual and political associat
dedicated to the ideal of freedom.
others reject these explanations
argue that the sisterhood betrays
the marks of a religious cult: the
tiation, the vow, the secret meeti
the fanatical loyalty, the refusa
break silence. The many explanati
far from casting rays of sharp and
arate light on the hidden places of
sisterhood, have gradually interpe
trated and thickened to form a clo
darkness, within which the girls m
unseen.

The Unknown

Like other concerned citizens, I h
brooded nightly over the sisterh
and the proliferating explanations,
til the darkness outside my window
comes streaked with gray. I have as
myself why we seem unable to pi
their secret, why we can't catch th
in the act. If I believe that I have at
discovered the true explanation,
one we should have seen from the
ginning, it isn't because I know so
thing that others do not know. Rat
it's that my explanation honors the
known and unseen, takes them i
account as part of what is actu
known. For it's precisely the elemen
the unknown, which looms so larg
the case, that must be part of any
lution. The girls, as we try to imag
them, keep vanishing into the
known. They are penetrated by
unknown as by some black fluid. I
possible that our search for the se
is misguided because we fail to incl
the unknown as a crucial elemen
that secret? Is it possible that
loathing of the unknown, our nee
dispel it, to destroy it, to violat
through sharp glittering acts of unc
standing, makes the unknown sw
with dark power, as if it were so
beast feeding on our swords? Are
perhaps searching for the wrong sec
the secret we ourselves long for? O
put it another way, is it possible that
secret lies open before us, that we
ready know what it is?

The Secret of the Sisterhood

I submit that we know everyth
that needs to be known in orde

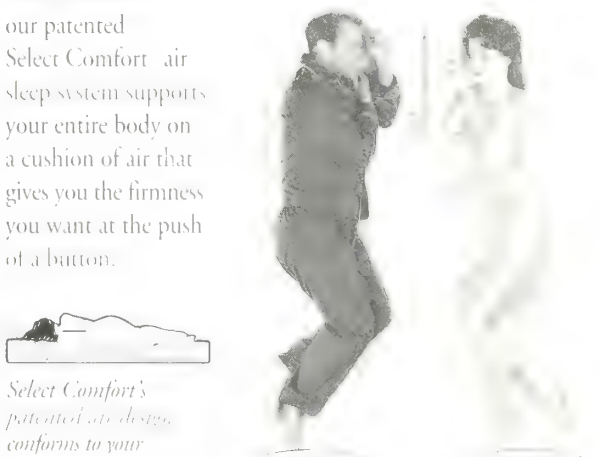
trate the mystery of the Sister- of Night. Dr. Robert Meyer, sole ss to a gathering, reported that ing whatever took place during irty-five minutes he observed the In her second confession Emily ing insisted that nothing hapd, that nothing ever happened, in the dark. I suggest that these rupulously accurate descriptions. nit that the girls band together at not for the sake of some banal itillating rite, some easily exposed n act, but solely for the sake of lrawal and silence. The members sisterhood wish to be inaccessi- They wish to elude our gaze, to draw from investigation—they above all, *not to be known*. In a l dense with understanding, opive with explanation and insight ve, the members of the silent sisod long to evade definition, to in mysterious and ungraspable. s! we cry, our voices shrill with Tell us everything! Then we will e you. But the girls do not wish to s anything, they don't wish to be l at all. They wish, in effect, to me invisible. Precisely for this reahey cannot engage in any act that t reveal them. Hence their silence, love of night solitude, their ritubration of the dark. They plunge secrecy as into black smoke: in oro disappear.

In the Night

maintain that the Sisterhood of t is an association of adolescent dedicated to the mysteries of soliand silence. It is a high wall, a d door, a face turning away. The hood is a secret society that can be disrupted, for even if we were event the girls from meeting at , even if we were to tie them to beds for their entire lives, the purposes of the association would in untouched. We cannot stop sterhood. Fearful of mystery, susus of silence, we accuse the memf dark crimes that secretly soothe or then will we not know them? ve prefer witchcraft to silence, l orgies to night stillness. But the long to be closed in silence, to be- pale statues with blank eyes and ts of stone. What shall we do with laughters? Nightly the secret sisterhood moves through our town. There is talk of the sisterhood preading to younger girls, to older girls, even the wives of our town seem restless, evasive. We long to confront our silent daughters with arguments, with violence; we wake in the night from dreams of bleeding animals. Someday the sisterhood must be exposed and punished, for once such ideas take root, who will be able to stop them? Those of us who counsel patience are accused of cowardice. Nightly there roll out bands of youth who roam the streets at night armed with pointed sticks. What shall we do with our daughters? In the night we wake uneasily and tiptoe to their doors, pausing with our hands outstretched, unable to advance or retreat. We think of the long years of childhood, the games we played, the lipopo, the summer of the blue bubbles in blue summer air. We dream of better times. ■

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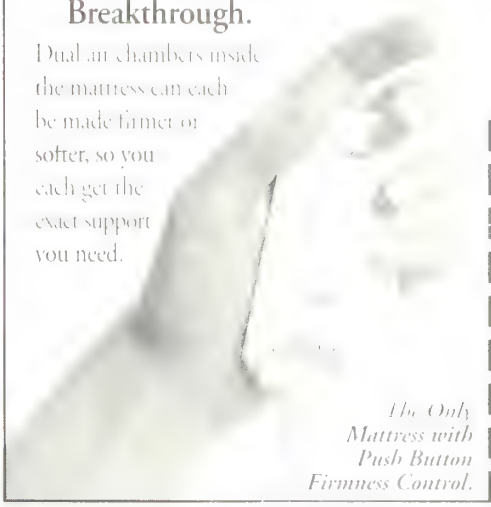
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THE GUN IN THE CLOSET

The arms race comes to Riverside, California

By Susan Straight

There was a time, not so long ago, when a gun would have been the last thing I expected my husband, Dwayne, to have known. I have known Dwayne for twenty years, since junior high, and in those years he was neither excited by nor even interested in guns. He wasn't allowed to hunt or fire at targets. I remember him as a teenager, refusing, again and again, to shoot pigeons with his cousins despite their relentless heckling. But much has changed since then, and now, as we all have heard and read, guns are everywhere.

Dwayne and I were born where we live now, in Riverside, California, a sprawling part-urban, part-rural city of 250,000 people sixty miles east of Los Angeles. Orange groves used to [illegible] huge tracts of tightly packed tile roofs. Dwayne and I walked to school through citrus groves and wild oat fields. He grew up on the Eastside, a mostly black and Latino neighborhood, and I grew up nearby, in a neighborhood bordered by boulder-strewn hills and groves and irrigation canals.

[illegible]

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

can, Vietnamese. Most of our
ghbor works at night, the narrow
s are crowded with parked lo
vans and mall trucks. Next door
a country-club maintenance
er, a metal-plating supervisor, a
cide detective, and a window
r. But across the street live a re-
y released mental patient—a
-pale young woman—and her
n addict brother, who conduct
ntal sale for
w, next to them are
redheaded women
we've heard, deal
ll-time in powdered
ances.

Lot our neighbors
ecite the new crime
ies published in our
l newspaper. The
rside–San Bernardi-
ea now has the high-
iolent-crime rate in
southern California,
er than that of Los
eles. In the city of
side, murder is up 50
nt in four years; rob-
is up 17 percent;
9 percent. The
s that I read about
nger feel like har-
ng incidents that
en to other people.
yone I know seems
ve a story. My neighbor
, an Irish-American
an, tells of driving on
reeway, thrilled to
a break from her
kids at home, when
nd-new red truck, driven by two
teenagers, began to tailgate her.
led alongside her car and the guy
e passenger seat, she told me,
ed at me and kind of held a gun
ose in his palm, like, 'See what
?'" Then they circled her car on
reeway, cut her off at the mall
and pulled into the mall park-
ot to disappear and, presumably,
p.

he worst incident happened at
ry, the drugstore several block
our house that sells the best, I
pest ice cream around. Thrifty
ext door to Big 5 Sporting Goods,
e, on a recent Monday afternoon,
man wielding equipment for



her daughters, Gail Scott, a supervisor at the drugstore, was behind the ice cream cone. As her mother stepped out of the store, a few rival gang members caught sight of each other in the parking lot, and they began exchanging gunfire. A bullet lodged in the woman's spine; she may never walk or drive again.

I know that Thrifty well. Dwayne took me there often when we were dating in high school. When we bought our house, I was secretly thrilled that I was within walking distance of the ice cream cones that I'd craved as a teenager. But the Thrifty no longer holds the place in my imagination that it once did. Several weeks after the shooting, a woman my age was carjacked there. On that Sunday afternoon, my daughter and I watched the police helicopters circle the parking lot. Police officers questioned customers on Main Street. We stood on the lawn, momentarily frozen, and then I quickly herded my children into the house. Now police helicopters hover ominously over the drugstore's parking lot.

The other day, a white-haired family stood outside and talked about these recent incidents and the guns in our neighborhood. Dwayne's mother shook her head and said, "I'm glad your daddy didn't need all those guns," she told her four sons.

"You never had one even when you had a roommate who was dealing," I said to Dwayne's older brother, who had just bought four guns—two .380 handguns and two derringers, tiny enough to fit in the palm of his hand.

He smiled. "I had *pull* back then, baby," he said. "Now I'm just a regular fool. And I gotta pack like everyone else. I got a family."

"Well, I sure don't understand *you* buying them, Dwayne," his mother said to him.

I knew what she meant. As teenagers, Dwayne and I had always avoided trouble. We'd made careful choices about where we went, avoiding bunker-house parties at which we thought there might be guns, and we didn't "stay in the streets," didn't hang out where trouble was most concentrated. It made sense to our mothers. But as I then Dwayne played basketball, I read, we went to school, got married, and bought that old house their middle-class parents certainly approved. Homeownership isn't common among friends and relatives of our generation.

The day I rented Uncle Buck at the Thrifty, I didn't know that the owner would be shot to death with a 12-gauge shotgun, four years after a rash of burglaries and prowling on the street. Even then, I thought addicts were stealing bikes, truck toolboxes, anything, and one morning at 4:00 A.M. a neighbor saw them trying to break through her bathroom window. She yelled for her husband, who pointed his loaded .357 Magnum at the silhouette, waiting for a part of the person to [illegible]

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[illegible] the homicide would be justifiable. After the shadow retreated, he told Dwayne, he was almost disappointed that he didn't get to pull the trigger. Dwayne went to Big 5 Sporting Goods the next day; he put the shotgun in our bedroom closet without telling me. Then one day recently, when I was rummaging for baby clothes on the shelf atop our tiny closet, I tugged on a sweater and the heavy shotgun fell on my head. I stared at the barrel, terrified. I was appalled that my husband actually owned a gun, that it was hidden in our house.

In the evening, after Dwayne had come home from work and our two-year-old and four-year-old daughters were asleep, I went out to the leaning, rickety wood-frame garage, where almost every night Dwayne works on his truck or builds screens for our house, which is falling apart piece by piece. The tools, the ancient fan, the visiting guys—it's a daddy place, our older daughter teases him.

The sliding wood door was closed tight. Five years ago, when we moved into this house, Dwayne used to keep the garage door open to catch some cool night air, but not now. After I knocked and shouted, "Who do you *think* it is? Come on," he rolled the door open. He was wearing a .380, a small handgun the guys call a baby-nine, in a holster behind his back. I had never seen it before.

"You're getting crazy," I said, and I told him about the shotgun that fell from the shelf.

"It's not loaded," he said. "The shells are on my side of the closet."

"And this?" I said, pointing to his back. I couldn't believe that my husband of ten years, who is afraid of dogs, whose favorite pet is a desert tortoise his godfather rescued from an abandoned crack house, a man who had always shrunk from weapons of any kind, was carrying a handgun on his body.

"I don't know what kinda fool's gonna come in here off the street," he said, nodding out at the busy four-lane avenue on our well-traveled corner. "And if they break into the house, I have the shotgun. Close to me."

I looked at the gun parts and cleaning fluids behind him, on the scarred wooden worktable in the garage. "How many guns do you have?" I asked. "The tr[illegible]

He looked away from me, th[illegible] ing, for a long minute. "I have thr[illegible] my dad's—the .410 shotgun, th[illegible] revolver, and the .22 rifle, the [illegible] that used to be my grandpa's in 19[illegible] He picked it up from the table [illegible] showed me the ancient rifle with [illegible] diamond-shaped, looped-wire sig[illegible] the end of the barrel. I waited. "[illegible] got two collector's guns, a .303 Br[illegible] infantry rifle that I got at the s[illegible] meet and a .44 Colt replica—sh[illegible] with black powder like the ones [illegible] in the Civil War. And for protect[illegible] I've got the 12-gauge, this .380, [illegible] other .22 rifle, and the Ruger [illegible] hadn't known about any of these [illegible] chases, though I did know [illegible] Dwayne had begun to go shoo[illegible] with my brother or K's husband, [illegible] of whom, I knew, had many firea[illegible] Dwayne looked at me, knowing w[illegible] I'd say. "Hey," he rushed on, "out h[illegible] our cops only just got the 9-mill[illegible] ters—three years after the L.A. [illegible] got theirs. What do you want m[illegible] say? I have to protect myself. I hav[illegible] protect you and the girls."

This is the first time Dwayne [illegible] done something serious without [illegible] letting me in on his thoughts. [illegible] bought all these weapons, lear[illegible] how to clean and load and sh[illegible] them, even constructed scena[illegible] that might require him to use th[illegible] Now he tells me his plans—how[illegible] ten he's considered the burglar, [illegible] intruder, and where he's decide[illegible] keep the shells—and I hear a stra[illegible] wooden tone in his voice, a reso[illegible] sound that places me outside a[illegible] ment. I'm the one he wants to [illegible] tect. He says it again [illegible] again.

Dwayne spends his days worl[illegible] with young criminals at a juvenile [illegible] tention center in Riverside. Whe[illegible] first started there ten years ago, [illegible] would come home each evening [illegible] rail against loose gun-control laws [illegible] allowed so many firearms on [illegible] streets. But I haven't heard Dwa[illegible] mention gun control for a while n[illegible] Every day he watches and feeds and [illegible] pervises his fifty juvenile charges, [illegible] are awaiting trial for their viol[illegible] crimes. He listens to the grisly det[illegible] of these incidents and hears no

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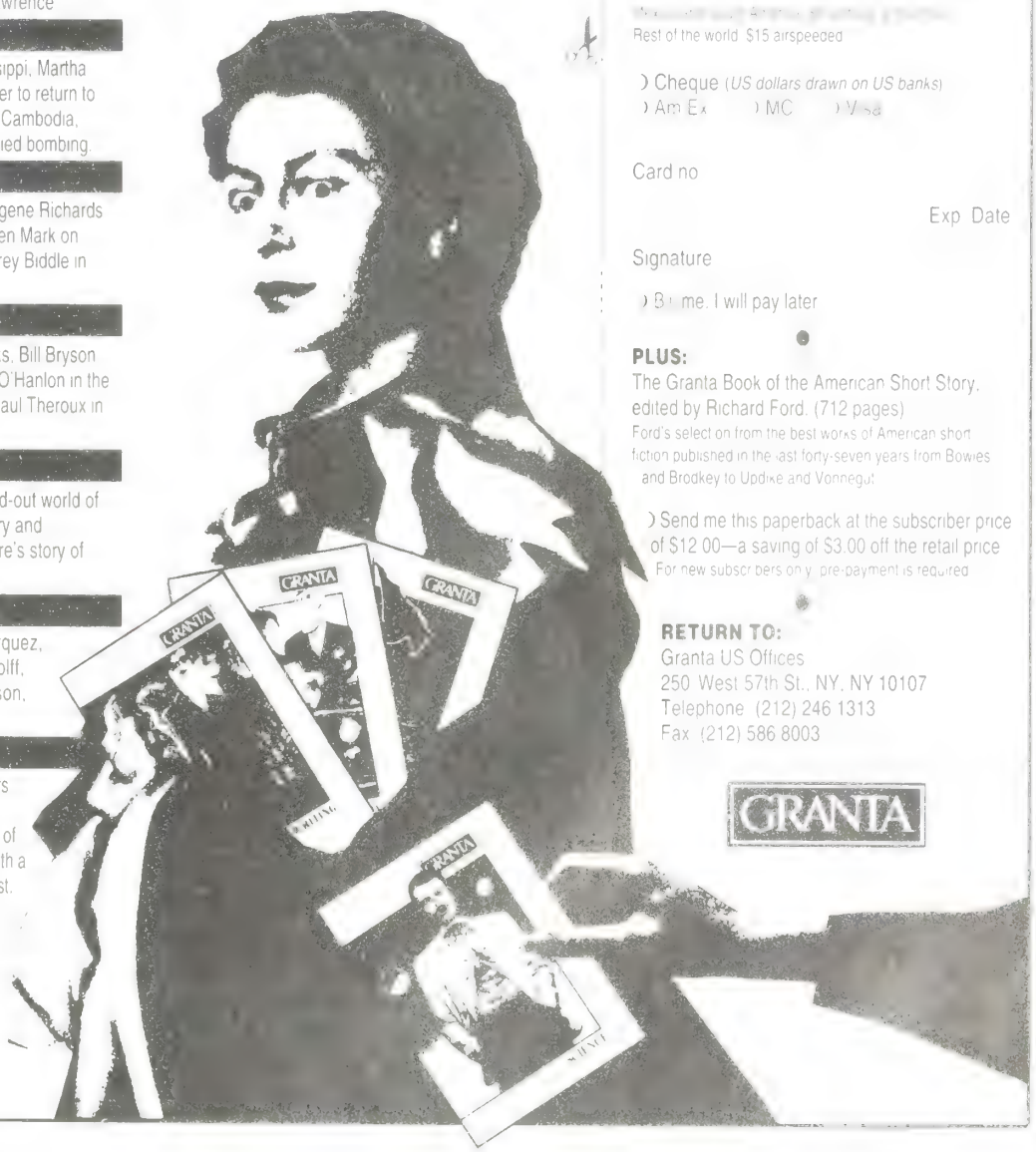
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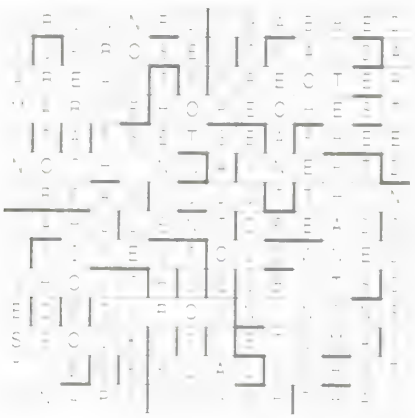
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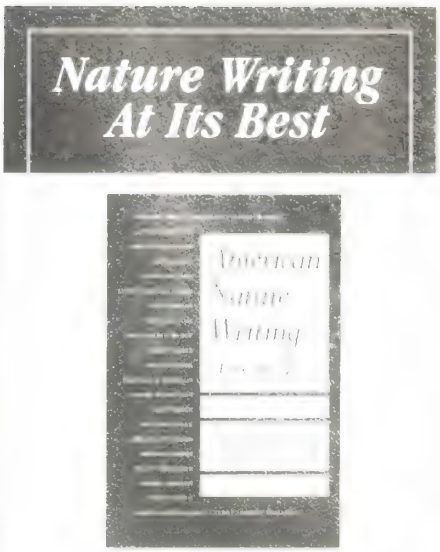




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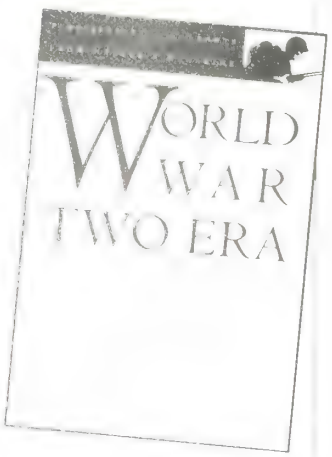




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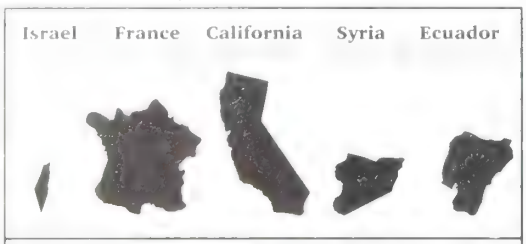
...ated in an address to AIPAC (American Israel Public ...ewish state should once and for all forget about "the ... was the first time that this phrase had been heard from the ... What does it mean? Does it have any relation to reality?

What are the facts?

Symbols in the flag. Arab propaganda ... symbols of the ... above and below the star of David, ... the Nile and the Euphrates ... respectively, and signify Israel's ... expansionist desire to form an empire ... that would supposedly reach from Cairo to Baghdad. But that has no basis in fact, of course. Nowhere in any documents of ... the most "radical" spokesman can any reference to anything like that be found.

Israel's Borders. "Palestine", part of ... Empire before World War I, ... British mandate after that war ... Heights were ... time. Israel's current borders ... the cease-fire lines in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Samaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Samaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reasons, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Samaria and of the Golan Heights.

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether former Secretary of State Baker was aware of it when he uttered his memorable phrase of "Greater Israel". A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank", the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen times as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernadino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab countries in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States.



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel", lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East

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Yes ... HM 42

...a gun in the glove compartment ... under the seat, and you get stop... by the cops?" I ask him, my voice s... me with frustration.

We sit in the kitchen, silen... a long time, listening ... voices passing outside.

I suppose it was inevitable, I ... was surprised nonetheless the ... got caught in the sound of pop... caps and flying bullets. The day ... completely ordinary. I was pickin... my baby girl from my mother-in... after work and had paused on the ... walk to read my mail, which is w... was so slow and oblivious when ... sounds began to crackle from the ... net. Suddenly I heard my sister-in... in the yard next door shouting at ...

All I could see was the look-kn... the heavy-meshed security scree... far away. I heard more pops, h... running, and I bent my head ... wardly, trying to be smaller as I s... bled for the knob, my neck me... like a turtle's.

Once inside, I slammed the ... and ran to the back room, where ... mother-in-law held the sleeping ... and sighed with resignation. "W... shooting now?" she asked.

It turned out that W, a young ... who lives a few doors down, had ... making the wrong hand gesture ... that corner, and when a carload ... val young men shot at him with ... rifle, he had run behind me to ... safety. The bullets flew past us ... while I lingered in the driveway.

Now in the afternoons I find m... wondering about the group of ... who crowd around the mailbox b... tence, the shiny black curls, the str... curves of red hair, the slicked-... brown ponytails, the plaid shirt... huge, cavernous pants—I must... think. They can't appear afraid; ... have to look tough, dress to ble... carry the right piece, because o... wise all they are is scared.

These are the boys my daug... watch from the windows and the ... My older girl likes our redhe... neighbor, whom Dwayne had ... tention twice last year. I like ... too—the way he laughs with sm... kids, the ancient bike he rides ... parents are alcoholics, I know, a... is rarely supervised. I wave at hi...

nters smile flirtatiously, and I
er if he has a gun. Another
borhood boy, one of four sons, is
ention now for robbing a pizza
ery man. He used a BB gun, for
n he was derided by staff and de-
es at Dwayne's job. And his
ger brother, four years old, is my
ear-old's "boyfriend," according
s mother. He's brown-skinned
shy, and I can't help but wonder
ther he, too, will end up incar-
d under Dwayne's watchful eye.
'how will our daughters go out with'
ne and I ask each other. Will
be any teenage boys left by then?
Or are they all going to kill
one another?

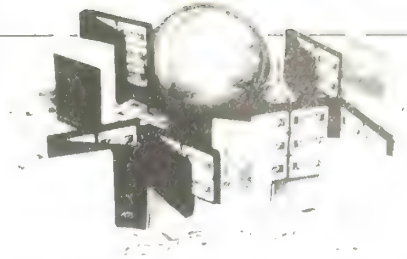
Now, lying in bed at night, I
ne the bullets: I see them flying
gh the walls of our house from
usy avenue, missing the speeding
at was their intended target. I lie
listening to a rustle in the back-
hearing our neighbor's sensor
pl nk on sharply, and with hal-
atory clarity I watch the fat, blunt
s from K's husband's .357 pene-
our bedroom wall as he fires at a
sed intruder.

an't get these images out of my
and I don't feel safer knowing
ne has his guns. I feel afraid all the
now, about the way that Dwayne
at the world and the way it looks
n, about how most men around
own weapons and display them
se them over parking spaces and
changes and money and lovers. I
ore helpless than ever in this ver-
of the Wild West where men set-
ings their way and guns pile on top
another like driftwood in houses
arages. Our teenage cousin, who
newborn baby, was shot in the
y her angry boyfriend last month.
hiding from him now. Would a
elp her? Dwayne just gave his
shotgun to one of his brothers,
lives in a drug-infested area of
side where an eight-month-old
was recently shot while she sat
er mother's lap outside of their
house. Would more guns
help her?

Even our porch frightens me. It's
nd open and faces the avenue.

Continued on page 85

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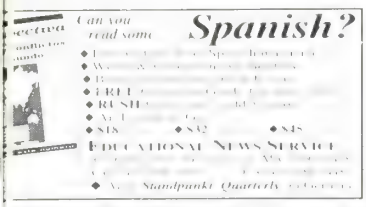
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I used to sit here for hours when the girls were babies, rocking them, and watching the endless stream of pedestrians and traffic. My daughter learned some of their first words here. Volkswagen, do-do-si-cu (motorcycle), helicopter, and boom truck, the ones with huge, pounding speakers.

Those nights when I sit on this old porch after the girls are asleep, rocking in the ancient plastic glider my parents gave us, I stare at the cars and imagine that someone might not like my face bobbing here. Or maybe the police will chase another carjacker from Fruitty. Or someone else's target might walk past on the sidewalk and hover near me. I have no camouflage.

I go inside. In the small room where I work, the radio plays rap. "I'm cruisin' with my Glock cocked," the rapper Ice Cube sings. "You coulda had a V-8 instead of a 3-8 slug to your cranium. I got six and I'm armin' 'em." I think of W, the shadow that flew behind me that day in front of my mother-in-law's house. Recently, he was involved in a fight at a funeral reception for a slain friend, and he ran shooting after the man into the parking lot of my niece's elementary school, Dwayne's old school. It was afternoon, and the stream of departing children cowered as W fired several shots and then fled. He was out on bail shortly after, and I see him on the street almost every day. Dwayne can't talk about it without beginning to shout.

I look down at my hands, remembering our recent trip to the pawnshop. Just month to look at rings for our tenth wedding anniversary. "Just take a look at the guns," Dwayne said, leading me to that counter. He wanted me to hold one. I wouldn't. He stared at the rifles in a long staggered row on the wall, and I watched him pick up a box of bullets, long and thin and gleaming. I know that with him and all the other men, the guns are more than just protection—they love the smell and the weight in their palms and the rolling bullets to the tips of their fingerpads. They say that they do. I glanced at all the handguns under my fingers, under the glass, and went to the counter on the other side, where the rings were lined up, too. The woman clerk smiled and shook her head. "That's how it always is, hon—the girls look at jewelry and the men look at guns."

When I [illegible] off my chair under the [illegible] on the cool wood [illegible] ment. I go into the back room to see if the girls have awakened, but they are [illegible] sleep. I [illegible] and stare out the window at the [illegible] light around the garage door. Dwayne has taken the shotgun out of the house. All the guns are in the garage with him, now. I can hear his fan and radio from here. I have known Dwayne for more than half my life. I have loved him for a long time, and my chest grows tight when I see the gold thread under the closed wooden door. He's out there, cleaning his guns, trying to fix things. ■

July Index Sources

1,2,3 Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (Waterloo, Canada); **4,5** U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs; **6** U.S. Federal Election Commission; **7** Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (Arlington, Va.); **8** Jean Rouleau, Montreal Heart Institute (Montreal); **9** Advisory Board Company (Washington); **10** National Center for Health Statistics (Hyattsville, Md.); **11** National Institutes of Health (Bethesda, Md.); **12** Center for Media and Public Affairs (Washington); **13** U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; **14** *Harper's* research/Post Mortem Arts (Seattle); **15** United Nations Population Division (N.Y.C.); **16** Council of Europe (Strasbourg, France); Population Reference Bureau (Washington); **17** VCIOM (Moscow); **18** Institute for Scientific Information (Philadelphia); **19** *MHQ—The Quarterly Journal of Military History* (N.Y.C.); **20,21** National Conference of Christians and Jews (N.Y.C.); **22** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; **23,24** David Clarke, *Inside EPA Water Policy Report* (Arlington, Va.); **25** U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; **26** New York City Landmarks Commission; **27** National Indian Gaming Commission (Washington); **28** Inter Tribal Bison Cooperative (Rapid City, S.D.); **29** National Buffalo Association (Fort Pierre, S.D.); **30** Fred Eck (Oatman, Ariz.); **31** Stephen Podewell and Susan Huizinga, Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, Mich.); **32** William Murdoch (Maidstone, England); **33** British Sausage Bureau (London); **34** Jonathan Wardlow, *Det Blå Avis* (Copenhagen); **35** Amblin Entertainment (Universal City, Calif.); **36** Toledo Museum of Art (Toledo, Ohio); **37** Treehouse Fun Ranch (Lucerne Valley, Calif.); **38** Universal Esperanto Association (N.Y.C.); **39** Edgewater Resort (Red Lake Falls, Minn.).

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In *New York Revisited*, first published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine* in 1906, Henry James observes turn-of-the-century New York in [illegible]. Although written in 1904-1905, when he returned to the United States after living abroad for more than twenty years, the essay is as pertinent today as it was 90 years ago. In this volume, the text appears as it did when originally published, and is enhanced with period illustrations and photographs and an introductory essay by Lewis H. Lapham, editor of *Harper's Magazine*.

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LETTERS

Continued from page 5

not) about the new right-to-die organizations, let it be known that Hemlock now stands as a voice of reason and a clearinghouse of information on this pressing issue.

The *Hemlock Quarterly* serves a purpose—giving terminally ill individuals information they could get nowhere else. But now it's time to quit clipping "barbiturate recipes" and work to create a climate in which laws that permit physician-assisted suicide can be passed. With its broader focus, *TimeLines* may have pushed the camel "out of the tent," as Fadiman writes, but it's heading for an oasis where friends and family will no longer need to worry about how much vodka their loved one needs to wash down the Nembutal after taking the Dramamine, then putting rubber bands around a withered neck while getting the plastic bag ready. In this oasis, a legal alternative to suffering will exist, finally, for terminally ill people.

Kris Larson
Editor, *TimeLines*
Eugene, Oreg.

In her perceptive article on the history of the modern euthanasia movement, Anne Fadiman nevertheless misinterprets the future role of the newly formed Euthanasia Research & Guidance Organization (ERGO!). Because the plastic-bag method of self-deliverance from a terminal illness must remain an option *for the present* (now that America is so close—several years—to legalizing physician-assisted suicide for the dying), ERGO! is concentrating on the careful implementation of this form of euthanasia. Although limited (it involves no lethal injections), this method could be fraught with dangers of abuse if [illegible] laws and guidelines are unsound." We aim to provide the expert knowledge that will make both patients and health professionals happy with the outcome.

Derek Humphry
President, ERGO!
Junction City, Oreg.

disappointed with Anne Fadi
rticle on the *Hemlock Quarter-*
ad of an evenhanded appraisal
thical issues behind the right-
movement and periodicals like
adiman's romp through the
iterature manages to trivialize
ncerns of those forced to take
avalier attitude toward these

le candidly acknowledging that
"healthy," "voyeuristic" read-
HQ, Fadiman irresponsibly as-
that most of its "affluent white
with gray hair" subscribers are
erfully disinterested as herself.
fers to *HQ* readers as amiable
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e way others read "*Needlepoint*
or *Bon Appétit*." One-upping the
r stereotype of those involved
ight-to-die movement as bizarre
s obsessed with death and all
morbid, Fadiman characterizes
eaders as "prurient . . . *connois-*
of suicide [who] might enjoy
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rmet might relish learning how
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so hard to buy, so hard to
and so laden with cholesterol
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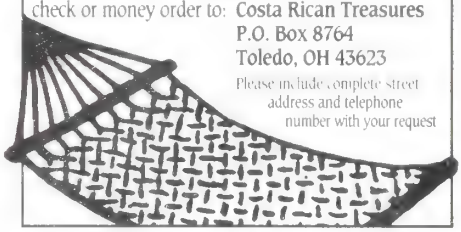
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The Might of the Ear M

I suppose we are to laugh at t[he] ... [phy]sician who visited a plague ... on his ear in an attempt to det[ect] whether our pets' ear mites ca[n] humans ["How Curiosity (A[nd] Killed the Cat Doctor," Re[ad] April]. But, in fact, there are p[er] millions of human and animal ... mental subjects out there wh[o] have wished there were a few m[ore] venturers of science abroad. Ima[gine] a doctor conducting an experi[ment] *himself*: not a dollar of grant mo[ney] graduate students at his beck a[nd] no symposiums at which to d[eliver] paper, and *actual* personal disc[overy]

If Columbus had been on t[he] demic dole, he might have se[t] chimps afloat on a boat with sel[f]ing gear and waited to see if t[he] turned from the East. Wilb[ur] Orville might have electrosh[ocked] their dog into nosing the eleva[tor] when the plane headed dow[n] Sir Edmund might have air-d[ropped] 200 Himalayan rabbits on top Snowy, then pondered how to r[etrieve] the corpses so as to study their ... and reaction to the cold befor[e] ally embarking on an ascent him[self] at least writing the grant propo[sal]

I wouldn't put Dr. Lopez up ... Nobel Prize (which has probably ... as much bad science as the sea[rch] the philosophers' stone, phlo[gis]ton and modern pharmaceuticals), ... has certainly satisfied my quest ... to God's purpose in creating ea[ch]

Bob Howard
Berkeley, Calif.

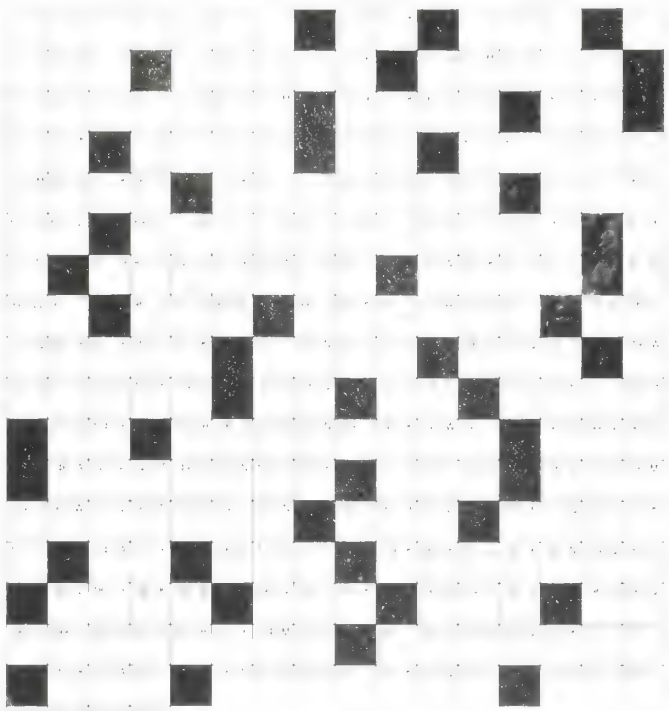
Award

Harper's Magazine on April ... ceived three National Magazine ... from the American Society of M[agazine] Editors. The 1993 winners in th[e] categories are as follows: Feature ... ing: "The Last Shot," by Darc[y] (April). Fiction: "The Prophet ... Jupiter," by Tony Earley (January ... 400-Pound CEO," by George Sa[un]ders (February); and "The Practical H[oax]" by Allan Gurganus (July). Essa[y] Criticism: "Mirrorings," by Lucy ... (February); "A Woman's Wor[k]" Louise Erdrich (May); and "The ... of Blue-Sky California," by David ... (July).

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 139

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 76.



CLUES — WORDS

A. An character actor who played Leroy, the gardener in *The Bad Seed* (full name) — 87 156 121 28 47 146 174 / 214 86 62

B. Wristwatches at the Battle of the Alamo, or Robert E. Lee's telephone, e.g. — 143 61 97 72 26 208 42 / 130 125 108 93 82

C. Vulgar, scurrilous — 199 131 46 135 15 145

D. Hardy — 48 146 133 126 155 3

E. Guiding doctrine — 8 155 109 227 44 13 152 134

F. Third-century saint, Roman martyr — 6 195 56 27 229 63 38 65 / 151

G. 1909 song by Will D. Cobb and John H. Flynn (hyph.) — 207 137 74 19 91 222 104 45 / 177 191 16

H. "Mind not high things, but condescend to men ___" (3 wds., Rom. 12:16) — 219 64 123 114 22 51 79 228 / 99 110 25

I. Ignorant, nescient — 30 20 73 154 110 127 58 173 / 211 49 95 224 215

J. Gorges, fissures — ___ ___ / 69 201 181 225 115 212

K. "When you're wounded and left on ___" (2 wds.; Kipling, *The Young British Soldier*) — 57 111 21 90 100 55 140 220 / 172 188 210 41 226 179 213 / 35 192 9

L. "The ___ are wholesome; then no planets strike," says Marcellus (*Hamlet*) — 164 31 122 139 206 7

M. Luminous — 155 33 53 23 204

N. Fixed; pre-arranged — 113 150 165 138 183 216

O. Excessive supply; surfeit — 142 159 5 61

P. Pressing; of immediate concern — 147 171 9 14 43 18

Q. Bulldozers, e.g. — 221 209 184 126 117 107 170 197 / 103 24 128

R. Estimable, meritorious — 135 77 202 10 193 132

S. Attractive — 54 78 157 60 166 40 14 29

T. Made sure — 17 136 1 92 12 148

U. Horrible — 67 75 3 9 178 175 11

V. Superficial knowledge of something — 195 190 161 189 36 5 99 76 / 144 149

W. Incapable of movement — 160 141 119 2 102 89

X. Eat up, especially in the military (2 wds.) — 85 167 203 169 182 80 34 32

Y. Sheet of metal with a hole in it for a rivet — 4 187 163 112 175 129 71

Z. Stock-in-trade; [illegible] — 168 131 68 218 18 194 205 186 / 55

Z1. [illegible] — 67 3 70 162 84 105 124 223

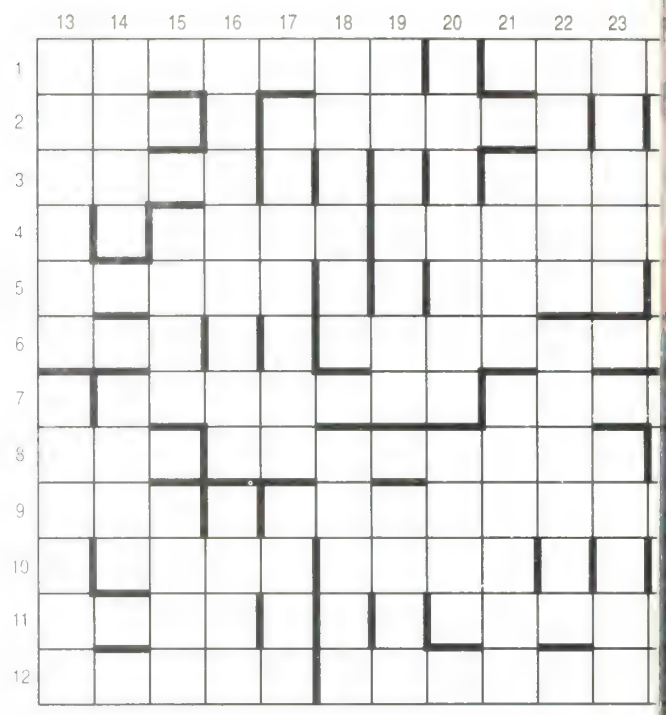
Z2. Chisels, swindles [illegible] — 98 176 94 81 200 87

Moving Parts

by E. R. Gallo and Richard Maltby Jr.

Each [illegible] complete, non-overlapping clues, producing two answers. From [illegible] letters must [illegible] and added to the other, creating two new words, which become the [illegible] Across or Down) indicated. For instance, if SEARCH and SOLAR are the [illegible] and SOLAR. As in this example, the fragment may be removed from, and added to, any part of the answer words. The enumerations in parentheses are given in order of the answers clued, which may not necessarily be the order of entry.

Clue answers include three proper names; one more appears among the lights. *Webster's Collegiate* [illegible] does not include one clue answer in 22 and the first light in 13 and 24. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 76.



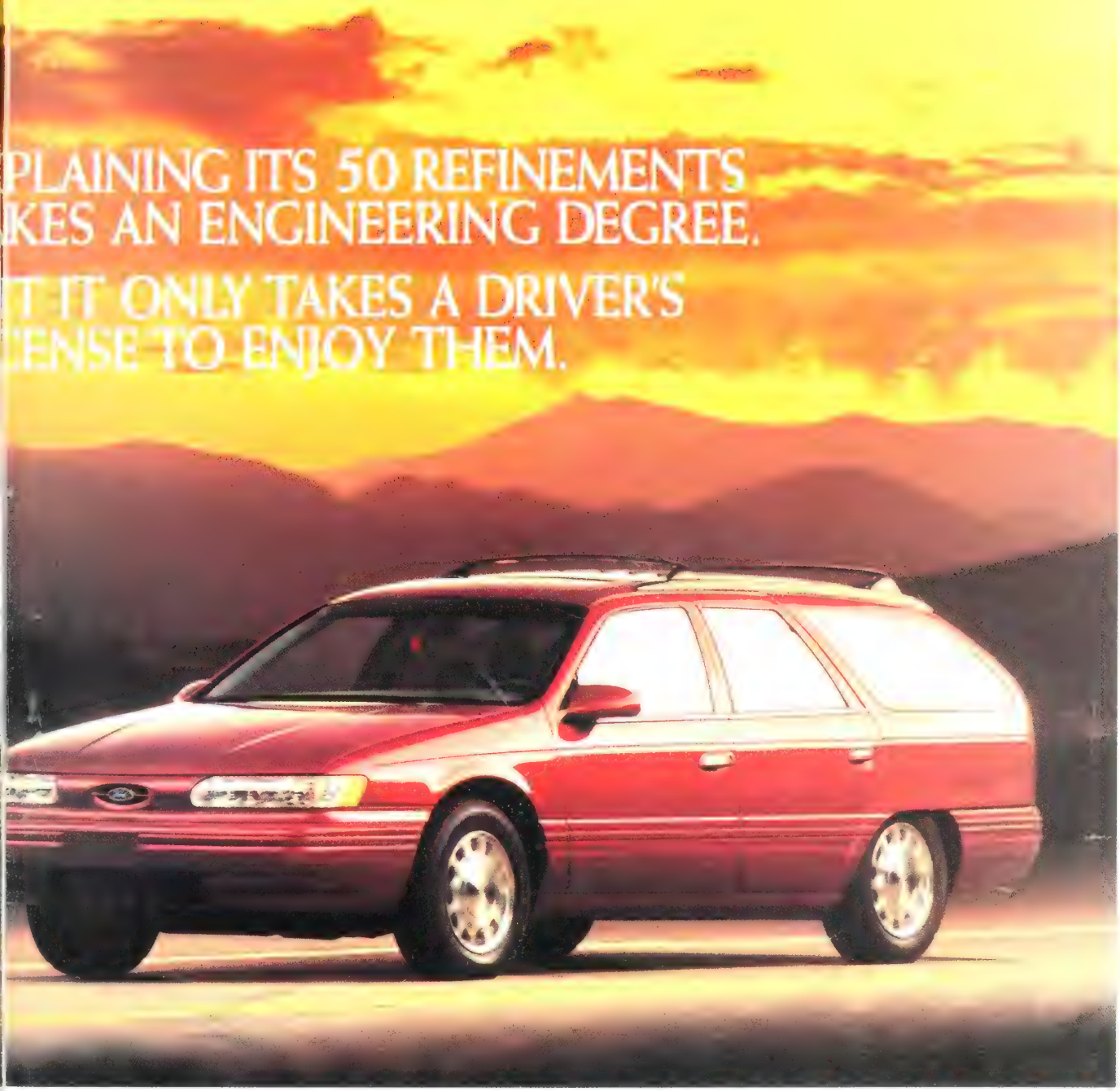
Across

1. Scores "The Entertainer," broadcast by singer like Ella? (4,7)
2. Beautiful girl—ripe for a makeover—ransacked posh Southern stores (4,5)
3. Long time agent, getting 40% off, will recast Lash Larue's debut (3,5)
4. Author allegedly holds hourly "Clean Dancing" run-through? (5,5)
5. The thing's found going back through statistics: two teams heartlessly carved up Poles (3,6)
6. Middle of nuptial service: boring man jilted Norma [illegible]
7. Ballet dancers verbalized, in essence, about mad desire (4,7)
8. Mishmash? This piece levels talk about those people? Just the opposite treatment! (4,7)
9. Strand dark red Indian from the Antilles around Rhode Island beachfront (6,5)
10. Caught in furious Amazon, e.g., sailor turned to prognosticator of the future (3,5)
11. Fortune teller said to burn plastic tire after Mass. It's on the bishop's head! (4,5)
12. Very concerned with auxiliary demand for payment, rejected General Electric's proddings (6,6)

Downs

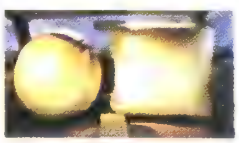
13. It's an awful mark of shame, or is her fooling around more indicative of a stable character? (5,7)
14. Resin produced initially during fuel strike—most of this exploded (5,3)
15. Branch office's head gets nowhere—loss on the books shows the German turnover (5,3)
16. Gas-fired devices burst there as an amount of petrol ignited ends of range (7,5)
17. Reasons for mass reorganization of Soviet jails: writers (7,4)
18. Splinter group, intent to hold on to $100, upset store owner but not one teller (4,7)
19. Fancy, top-grain, split, gilt, or natural hides (7,4)
20. Groups traipse drunkenly nearby, hoisting hard liquor (7,4)
21. Booze gets you overly upset in High Church. A lot of *amore* turns up here! (6,4)
22. One moving in fast circles in Rome can appear to be rich to a Junior Leaguer crossing the border? Just the opposite! (7,4)
23. What misery! A girl, losing last impacted molar, takes it finally like a man (4,6)
24. Curious, tall, rangy, brave character sounds twisted with liquor (7,3)

[illegible] Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. [illegible] three correct solutions opened at random will [illegible] September issue. Winners of the May puzzle, "Jimmy [illegible] Hamden, Connecticut.



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HARPER'S

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JOURNEY THROUGH A DOOMED LAND
Exploring Chernobyl's Still-Deadly Ruins
By Alan Weisman

NIXON'S LAST TRUMP
Watergate Histories, Real and Imagined
E. Howard Hunt, Jack Hitt, Oliver Stone, James S. Rosen, Alexander Butterfield

A DEMOCRATIC DAWN
Election Day in South Africa
By André Brink

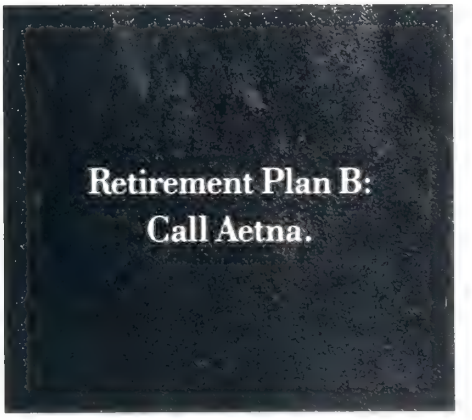
THE CUT OF HIS JIB
...y Giardina

...p. Barney Frank, ...ror in America

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HARPER'S

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HARPER'S

LETTERS

Wired, for Better or Worse

The argument between Sven Birkerts and Kevin Kelly on the terrors and pleasures of computer networks ["The Electronic Hive," Readings, May] boils down to an unanswerable question: "What's human?" For Birkerts, a literary critic, it has to do with souls and "depth" and the search for meaning and purpose; with tradition, ritual, mystery, and individualism—"primary things." For Kelly, one of the founders of the WELL, a computer-conferencing system, the primary thing is the Net, the hive, which "conveys the logic of both the computer and nature." He writes of "one planetary soul" and of "techno-spiritualism" and the "organic" nature of networked computers reflecting our own brains, themselves mere "networks of mini-minds." For Birkerts, the networked computers of the hive are dehumanizing; for Kelly, "we become more human, not less so, when we use them." This conflict strikes me as not unlike Plato's differences with the Sophists, who would have prospered on the Net [illegible]

While I essentially agree with Kelly (though his emergent "planetary soul" is a bit much), I regret, like Birkerts, having to give up the comforting [illegible] "I." Too bad. Birkerts's division of the world into the "deep" (desert islanders) and "shallow" (networkers) is a phony one, and his notion that networking and "existential coherence" are inimical is simply nonsense. Even his notion that our engagement with computers and the nets is a kind of laziness—ease over true physical effort—is wrong. He speaks of "deeper philosophical ramifications," but in fact he is afraid of them.

Kelly's laissez-faire attitude toward the "largest functioning anarchy in the world," meanwhile, seems amazingly complacent. If creatures of the past were hived under queen bees like Alexander the Great or Genghis Khan, it seems unlikely that hived creatures of the future will escape their own hive masters. And the unhived? No doubt they will get stepped on. The Sophist principle "knowledge is power" will make them mere meat at the fringe.

And finally, what about art? Kelly dismisses it as self-conscious and rigid, opting for conversational ephemera [illegible] in art survive on the buzzing, metamorphic, and anarchical Net?

It can and will.

Robert Cooter
Providence, R.I.

I read with interest the "debate" between Sven Birkerts and Kevin Kelly [illegible] issue with the futile admonitions of the former, I should add that I am Kevin Kelly's friend and a fellow Net religionist.

Although Kevin might disagree, I say we are both spiritual descendants of the French theologian and anthropologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Long before the invention of digital media he proposed that the "point" toward which all human history had been directed was the creation of a great collective organism: Mind, a planetary

ciousness sufficiently interesting to
ide company for God
other words, I agree with Birkerts
the electronic hive will change
ofoundly. When I first got a sense
e Net, I went around saying that
ould have a greater consequence on
it is to be human than movable
. I'm now inclined to think this is
most transforming technological
nt since the capture of fire
's a human being, I share many of
erts's reservations about being sub-
ed into this Great Thing, but I am
persuaded by Teilhard's sense of its
logical inevitability. This is where
rt company with Birkerts, who
s to think we have more control
our destiny as a species than I do.
find is at once continuous and in-
ve of all individual consciousness—
d or not. So choosing not to partic-
, as Birkerts proposes, would proba-
equire not only that I deep-six my mo-
but that I stop thinking as well.

At the least, it would require that I stop doing that most human of things: reaching to scratch the Permanent Itch. This irritant, this hard-wired dissatisfaction, is the base-level algorithm that drives another great beast of the collective: Technology. It is this, and neither bipedal posture nor opposable thumbs, that sets us apart from all other creatures. More restless than wise, we members of the species *Homo insatisfactens* don't adapt to the world; we adapt the world to ourselves. It seems that nothing, short of our own likely extinction, will stop us from doing that. It's just what we do.

When the yearning for human flesh has come to an end, what will remain? Mind may continue, uploaded into the Net, suspended in an ecology of voltage as ambitiously capable of self-sustenance as was that of its carbon-based forebears.

It's not a matter of embracing this process. It has already embraced us and may, in fact, have designed us for it in the first place.

John Perry Barlow
barlow@eff.org

In the adaptation from his book *Out of Control: The Rise of Neo-Biological Civilization*, Kevin Kelly lays out his vision of the benefits that we may expect from the Internet and computerized communication. "Many participants," he writes, "prefer the quality of writing on the Net to book writing because Net writing is of a conversational, peer-to-peer style. . . . Instead of the rigid canonical thinking cultivated by the book, the Net stimulates another way of thinking: telegraphic, modular, nonlinear, malleable, cooperative."

This is a grand vision, but the nonlinearity and open access to the Net that Kelly praises are also two of its greatest weaknesses. Net discussions

continued on page 75

"O, alas how little did I know where I was and what I was put into that house for. Such a crime I never read of, and it is covered up under the garb of derangement, and I am the poor sufferer."
—ELIZABETH T. STONE (1842), from Women of the Asylum

This account by Elizabeth T. Stone, institutionalized 1840-1842, begins the fascinating and frightening testimony of twenty-six women who lived behind asylum walls. Hidden away in the name of psychiatry—often at the mere whim of fathers, husbands, brothers—they speak out in "gripping and terrifying first person accounts....These courageous, intelligent and insightful women...have left us a great legacy."
—John S. McIntyre, M.D., President, American Psychiatric Association

VOICES FROM BEHIND THE WALLS 1840–1945

WOMEN OF THE ASYLUM

JEFFREY L. GELLER & MAXINE HARRIS
Foreword by PHYLLIS CHESLER

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NOTEBOOK

A bull for Apollo

Lewis H. Lapham

sit then throats, skinned them and

the meat from the thighbones and
wrapped them in fat.
And all day long
they appeased the god with song, rais-

away the plague

Homer

I

never suffer the indignity of handling tarnished coins or dog-eared dollar bills. The paper currency is always new, and

smudged dimes onto the premises, the

American society—in the universities

philanthropies and the financial pro-

in Washington aspire to standards no less exacting than those in force in Palm Beach, and when I read in the papers last June that Congressman Daniel Ros-

seventeen counts of corruption (among them embezzlement, conspiracy, tampering with a witness, and mail fraud) I thought of an old copper penny on

head of Abraham Lincoln. The con-

soiled by the commerce of the streets

the steam kettles with the dingy quarters and last night's s

Because Rostenkowski had been chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee for thirteen of his thirty-five years in Congress, and therefore a politician of grave and venerable rank, the friends of conscience in Washington made an excited show of their horror and disgust. Eric H. Holder Jr., the United States Attorney who presented the evidence to a federal grand jury, characterized the latter's conduct as "offensive," "reprehensible," so "corrosive" in its effect on the public trust that if left unpunished it was likely to "undermine the very principles upon which this nation stands." Announcing the indictment to a crowded press conference at the Justice Department, Holder mount-

registers of virtuous indignation. He let it be known that "this is not, as some have suggested, a petty matter" but rather a damnable proof of betrayal, an assault on "our democratic system of government," and a mortal insult to "the vast majority of the members of Congress [who] have been, and are, decent and honorable public officials who work incredibly hard and follow all the rules."

The attending news media followed the instructions on the prosecutor's cue cards, and over the next few days

Journal, and the *Washington Post* various columnists and editorial writers variously characterized the chairman as a "lost soul," a master maker of deals, "a throwback to an earlier era," "one of the most powerful men in the country," the arrogant spawn of a democratic majority too long in office in the House. The *Post* sternly reminded its readers that the defendant's crimes were "anything but petty; they can't be put in the everybody-does-it category either," and the *Wall Street*

worrying about "the per-

sive appearance of muck," compar

Rostenkowski to "a modern Geo

III—the product of a system in wh

the spheres of public and private l

have merged into a single Presenc

Although admirable as works

rhetorical prose, the newspap

speeches, like the prosecutor's sta

ment of egalitarian principle, w

somewhat grandiose for the wick

ness at hand. The seventeen spec

instances of corruption set forth in t

indictment didn't come close to s

porting the weight or pretension

the collective reprimand. Congr

man Rostenkowski stood accused

defrauding the government of rou

ly $600,000—a sum that Holder

vertised as testimony to the defend

gross appetite for graft—but on a ca

ful reading of the forty-nine pages

the grand jury's true bill, the su

proved to have been assembled o

two decades (1971–1993) in a serie

transactions that seldom exceed

$30,000 in any one year. From time

time the defendant allegedly had g

rymandered his payroll accoun

abused his privileges at the House S

tionery Store and the House P

Office, overspent his government

lowance for leasing automobiles. On

least fourteen different occasions

allegedly had directed the House

nance Office to issue checks to pers

who performed "little" or "no offic

work," mostly minor followers (

wife of a Chicago precinct captain

housekeeper, a chauffeur, an assist

doorkeeper, a son-in-law) who mow

the defendant's lawn, picked up t

defendant's laundry, painted the

fendant's house, photographed l

daughters' weddings, and engrav

on commemorative brass plaques, t

words "Friendship" or "Our Pal."

account at the House S

:ery Store, the congressman was
eved to have charged, improperly,
cost of sixty wooden armchairs
nd-painted and inscribed with the
endant's name), 250 pieces of fine
a (given by the defendant as wed-
g presents), and twenty-six pieces
heap luggage, costing, in aggre-
, approximately $2,200. At the
htly higher elevations of graft, the
gressman compelled one or an-
er of his dependents ("Employee
nber one," the photographer, and
nployee number six," the former
-in-law) to refund to him a per-
tage of his or her government pay,
l at the House Post Office he oc-
ionally exchanged his allotment of
tage stamps for cash. Again the
ounts were negligible ($1,000 here
l $2,000 there), and they suggest
the character of a man likely to in-
ge in careless extravagance rather
n commit well-organized robbery.
Nor did anything in the indictment
respond to the defendant's oppor-
nities to stage genuinely impressive
ds on the federal treasury. The
use Ways and Means Committee
tes the nation's tax laws and su-
intends the division of the federal
ils, and between a late breakfast
l an early lunch on any given leg-
tive day, the chairman was accus-
ned to directing several hundreds of
llions of dollars to its deserving al-
s and friends. On the afternoon of
fall from legislative grace, the kind
people who talk to the newspapers
ke of him as "a heavyweight,"
nebody who really knew how to
ce a bribe or rig the tax code, "a
rd politician of the old school" who
ferred rare steaks and cold martinis
Perrier water and grilled fish. In a
nt-page dispatch to the *New York*
es, a reporter seeking to place Ros-
kowski in historical perspective
scribed what he remembered as a
ics lesson in the defendant's office
November 1985, a few hours be-
e the House Ways and Means Com-
ttee voted on that year's tax-reform
l. The chairman was talking on the
ephone to the lesser members of
committee, reminding them of
tax exemptions that he had be-
wed on sports stadiums in Cleve-
d and northern New Jersey, on a
nvention center in Miami and a
waste-management plant in New York City, on parking garages in Memphis and Charleston, on a savings-and-loan association in his own dearly beloved city of Chicago. Impressed by the heft and size of the chairman's clout, the reporter formed a vivid impression of a consummate fixer of parking tickets never at a loss for the chance to collect a stray $100,000 on his way to the men's room or while standing around in the Capitol rotunda under the portrait of Tecumseh.

On the plausible assumption that prosecutor Holder's agents ransacked the congressman's files and records as thoroughly as police detectives breaking up the furniture in an escaped convict's mobile home, what is remarkable about the defendant is his vanity, not his dishonesty or his greed. Always a poor man in the company of well-groomed bankers and sun-tanned owners of football teams (people who earned upwards of $3 million a year and could afford to spend $25,000 a week on the company plane or the cocktail shrimp), the faithful Rostenkowski during all those years of brokering literally billions of dollars in government subsidy (and at the same time trying to keep up appearances as a guest at the table of oligarchy) served his corporate overlords as dutifully as an English gamekeeper looking after the squire's grouse. And in return for his service, what did the chairman ask for himself? A collection of souvenirs, some petty cash, and a few personal attentions provided by the tenants of an apartment building that he owned in the not especially exquisite Fifth District of Chicago, on a street that almost certainly would have offended the sensibilities of George III.

As compared with the norms of financial courtesy that obtain everywhere else in official Washington—Clark Clifford billing a client $25,000 for a single telephone call, lecture fees in amounts upwards of $15,000 paid to William Safire and George Will by various corporate sponsors, lobbyists cheerfully paying $20,000 for the privilege of sitting at dinner with Secretary of State Warren Christopher—the defendant's needs were modest, his habits frugal. The chairman took so little when he could have taken so much, and in the wreckage of the indictment he stands revealed as a model of congressional deportment. He found his pleasure in the small proofs of his power—a phone call for some people and not for others, handing out cigars and tax exemptions, obliging self-important businessmen to wait in the anteroom of the Ways and Means hearing room before listening to people laugh at his jokes.

Why then the prosecutor's alarm and the pious mumbling in the news media? Set aside or take for granted the possibility of a Republican intrigue, and the question speaks to the air of nervousness in official Washington rather than to the name and number of the defendant's crimes. For the last five or six years, and most pointedly in the 1992 presidential election, the American people have not been shy about giving voice to their loathing and mistrust of the political status quo. H. Ross Perot constructed his campaign platform on little else except the premise of resentment, and in the November election, without declaring himself a candidate and despite his obvious likeness to both a demagogue and an autocrat, he received one fifth of the popular vote. In Virginia this summer, Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North stands for election to the United States Senate on a platform of contempt for the institution of which he hopes to become a precious ornament. Fourteen states have passed laws imposing term limits on their congressional representatives, and the opinion polls show a steadily rising curve of hostility toward official Washington—its habitual arrogance, its indifference to the concerns of the average citizen, its fatuous luxury and languid squandering of the public purse. The mood of populist suspicion lately has turned so ugly that even case-hardened politicians have begun to think the rewards of office no longer worth the labor of their acquisition. So far this year no fewer than nine senators and forty-six members of the House of Representatives have announced their intention to withdraw from the autumn elections, and when asked to explain their departures they mostly mention their unwillingness to

tragic flaw"); they also bear witness to the shabbiness of the defendant's soul. [illegible] American cosmology, money is a synonym for God, and a politician who steals from the collection plate can be condemned as both a criminal and a heretic. Of the thirty or forty members of Congress led to sacrificial slaughter over the last ten years, all but three or four have trespassed against the majesty of wealth, and it is the tawdriness of the sum that imparts value to the ritual. By proving himself to be a poor man who needs the money—$1,000 here, $2,000 there—the defendant commits both the unpardonable American crime and the unforgivable American sin. Frank Mankiewicz, formerly an assistant to President John Kennedy and now a prominent public-relations man in Washington, explained the catechism to one of the newspaper reporters who wondered why Rostenkowski hadn't amassed a fortune in the bond market and why it was that Democratic politicians were more easily corrupted than their Republican confederates. "The lower classes steal," Mankiewicz said. "The upper classes defraud. The Republicans don't need walking-around money."

Year in and year out for as long as I have been reading the tale of American politics, the ritual cleansings of the government in Washington have followed one upon the other in a rhythm as certain as the changing of the seasons. The headlines come and go, and so do the defendants on the courthouse steps, but the habits of corruption remain as firmly in place as the Lincoln Memorial or the star of Bethlehem. Year in and year out the lobbyists continue to prosper and grow fat; the price of real estate moves steadily upward in Fairfax County, Virginia, and next year's tariff proves as lucrative as last year's defense contract. Although the charges against Rostenkowski evolved from the discovery of a check-kiting scheme in the House Post Office in 1992, the members of the House over the last two years have voted—not once but twice—to suppress all further investigation of the scheme; nor has the House made good on its repeated promises to reform the campaign-finance laws. Even more tellingly to the point, Representative Joseph McD[illegible] (R., Penn.), the ranking Republ[illegible] on the House Ways and Means C[illegible] mittee, was indicted two years ag[illegible] bribery and racketeering, but as o[illegible] present writing the legal embar[illegible] ment hasn't prevented him from [illegible] tinuing to oversee the manageme[illegible] the nation's finances.

As always, what is wanted in W[illegible] ington is the illusion of reform, [illegible] the thing itself. The appetite fo[illegible] monstrance grows with the run[illegible] upon which it feeds, and as the r[illegible] ers of the tabloid press come to [illegible] fuse the nation's politics with day[illegible] soap opera (President Clinton [illegible] motel with a Miss Arkansas, his [illegible] speculating in the commodities m[illegible] ket, one White House aide found [illegible] in Fort Marcy Park, and another [illegible] going off to play golf in Air Force [illegible] licopters) the prime-time audie[illegible] demands gaudier entertainme[illegible] more solemn scourgings, richer sa[illegible] fices. Anxious to appease an incr[illegible] ingly restive electorate, the rule [illegible] the state offer increasingly theatr[illegible] shows of their innocence. Presi[illegible] Clinton travels to the beaches of N[illegible] mandy to pose for photographs ag[illegible] a backdrop of military glory, an[illegible] Washington the servants of the g[illegible] god demos lead forward to the alt[illegible] justice the prize bullock otherw[illegible] known as Congressman Daniel R[illegible] tenkowski, chairman of the Ho[illegible] Ways and Means Committee.

No network news director co[illegible] have made a happier casting decis[illegible] First and foremost, the chairman l[illegible] like a caricature of the corrupt po[illegible] cian—squinting and heavyset, a [illegible] solute softness of the jowls, [illegible] expression in the eyes as lifeless as [illegible] expression in the eyes of a coro[illegible] Secondly, the chairman had mad[illegible] loud show of his skill at making de[illegible] bragging to the press about his [illegible] quaintance with smoke-filled roo[illegible] Thirdly, and by no means unimp[illegible] tantly, the chairman could be prese[illegible] ed as an archaic figure inexplica[illegible] escaped from a prehistoric past. T[illegible] newspapers earnestly stressed the la[illegible] point. The *Washington Post* was qu[illegible] to reassure its readers that R[illegible] tenkowski "learned the game of poli[illegible] in a bygone era . . . far different from [illegible] Washington of the 1990s with its [illegible]

endent counsels and ethics codes," the *Times* was careful to observe t the defendant was "caught in a e-warp," an old ward politician who, an extinct species of wharf rat, had ed to adapt to the evolving norms lean and efficient government.

Until the week prior to the chair-n's indictment, the ritual form of sacrifice looked to be securely in ce, and it was assumed that the lock would go placidly to its fate. e newspapers supplied the proper ntities of front-page incense, and defendant's lawyer, Robert S. nett, had agreed to a plea bar-n with the Justice Department that wed the defendant to resign from ngress, admit to a single felony t related to his traffic in stamps h the House Post Office), pay a ,000 fine, and serve six months in son. Official Washington was de-nted with the arrangements. The irman's own counsel—so deft a vant of the status quo that he al-was defending President Clinton inst the charges of sexual imperi-m brought by Paula Jones—had rpened the sacred knife with ch the chairman was expected to his own throat. The ladies and tlemen in the press gallery looked ward to a brief but poignant spec-le, after which everybody could to lunch at Maison Blanche and w that once again the Republic been led out of temptation and ivered from evil.

The script appealed to everybody the bullock. Two days before the nd Jury handed up the indictment, defendant refused the plea bar-n and, instead of accepting what gossip in Washington described 'the deal of the century," issued a ement avowing his innocence. He ed new counsel (a Chicago lawyer, a Washington lawyer) and said t he would gladly stand trial for seventeen crimes that he didn't commit.

f a jury finds the chairman not lty, the verdict might mean that s ahead of the times instead of be-d the times and that the art and ctice of representative government longer can rely on the willing sus-sions of disbelief. On the day that Rostenkowski was indicted, I listened to a Chicago radio show take calls from the defendant's constituents, and although they readily conceded that the gentleman was a crook, they didn't think him any different from the rest of the crooks in Washington. He had done what he had been elected to do and had brought back to Chicago more than its fair share of the federal spoils. Why then belabor him with the mockery of the law?

Comparable degrees of cynicism apparently sustain a number of the summer's political campaigns. Oliver North, a convicted felon, seeks election as the junior senator from Virginia; Marion S. Barry Jr., formerly mayor of Washington, D.C., and not long ago released from jail, stands for re-election to the office in which he was last seen smoking crack; Representative Ken Calvert (R., Calif.) asks the voters in Riverside County to return him to Congress despite his having been found in what the papers called "a compromising position" with a prostitute in a car in downtown Corona.

By refusing prosecutor Holder's plea bargain, Rostenkowski gave up the gavel of the House Ways and Means Committee but retained his seat in Congress. Two days after being indicted for conduct so offensive as to "undermine the very principles on which this nation stands," he returned to the table over which he had been accustomed to preside, and although he was no longer chairman, his fellow members welcomed him with two standing ovations. On reading of their courtesy in the next morning's paper, I couldn't help but admire them for applauding the arrival of their own doom. If the rituals of purification no longer instill in the faithful feelings of reverence and awe, then who or what will protect Washington's equestrian classes from the wrath of the distant archer god? Let the laundering of politicians become as banal a procedure as the laundering of money in Switzerland or Grand Cayman, and the nervous court chamberlains on K Street can look forward to meeting (under circumstances probably unpleasant) a good many people to whom they haven't been properly introduced in the Cosmos Club or the White House Rose Garden. ■



We are pleased to announce that the American Society of Magazine Editors has selected *Harper's Magazine* as the recipient of the National Magazine Award, the industry's highest honor, in the following three categories:

Darcy Frey
The Last Shot

David Beers
The Crash of Blue-Sky California

Louise Erdrich
A Woman's Work

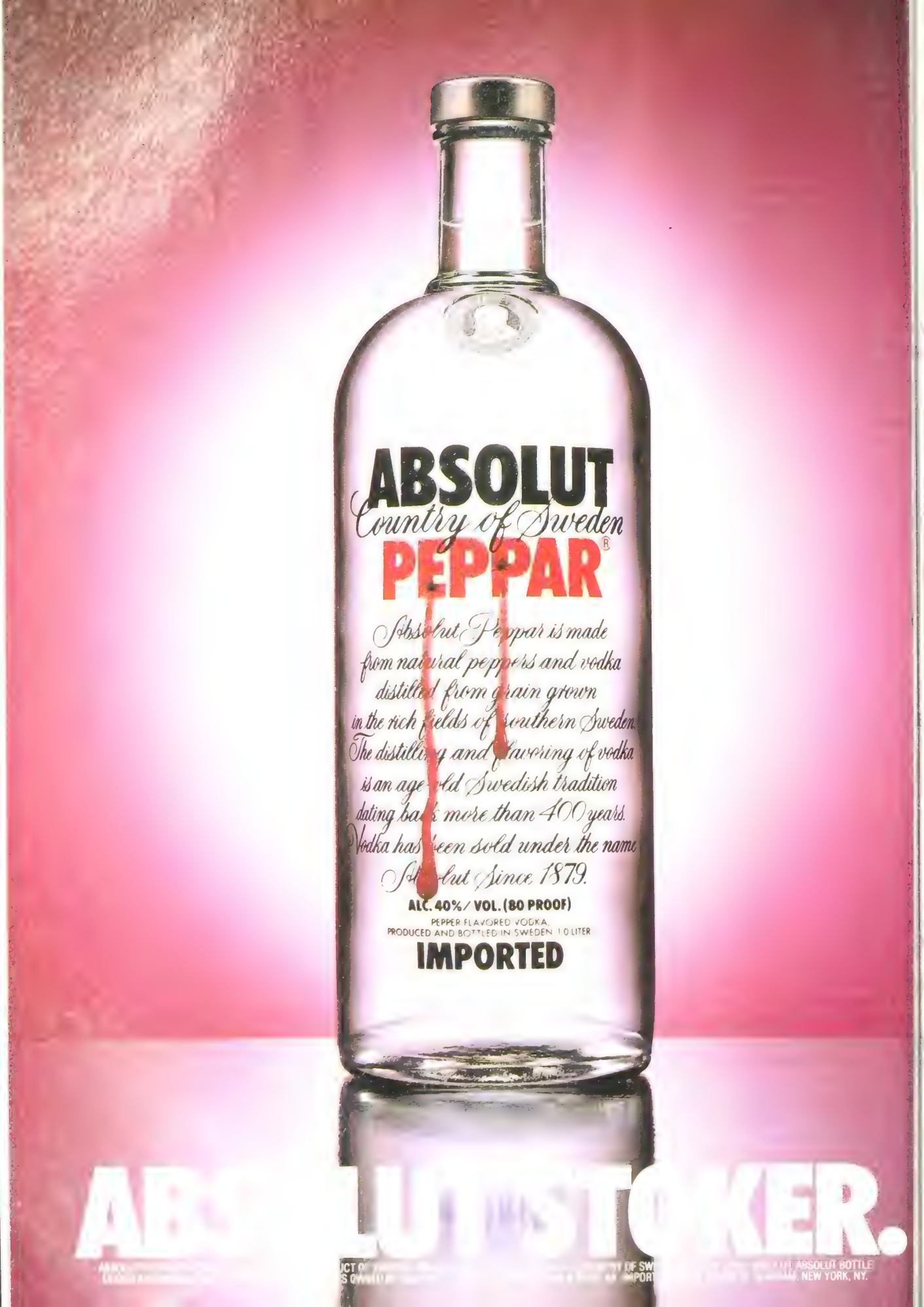
Lucy Grealy
Mirrorings

Tony Earley
The Prophet From Jupiter

Allan Gurganus
The Practical Heart

George Saunders
The 400-Pound CEO

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HARPER'S INDEX

Amount the Pentagon will spend this year on major weapons programs initiated before 1989 : $18,24[illegible]

Percentage of Richard Nixon's White House tapes that have not yet been made public : 99 (see page 44)

Number of federal workers employed full-time this year to manage national-security documents : 32,397

Average unemployment rate during the 1980s in the ten states with the largest number of immigrants : 6

Average unemployment rate in the ten states with the fewest immigrants : 5

Percentage of the Japanese computer-software market controlled by U.S. companies : 54

Amount by which the number of countries where Coca-Cola is sold exceeds the number that belong to the U.N. : 11

centage of Europeans who cannot name another European country they consider their "most reliable political ally" : 43

Percentage change, since 1990, in unemployment in Sweden : +387

Portion of the Polish government's annual budget that is spent on pensions : 1/4

Price of a nine-night "Schindler's List" tour of Kraków, Poland, from Edgewater Travel in Chicago : $1,750

Price paid last April at a rain-forest charity auction for a walk-on part on *Seinfeld* : $15,000

Number of writers who contributed to the screenplay of *The Flintstones* : 32

Chances that an actor who played a Munchkin in *The Wizard of Oz* is still alive : 1 in 7

stimated number of standard-sized helium balloons required to lift an American ten-year-old off the ground : 2,450

Average amount left by the tooth fairy in 1969, per tooth : 25¢

Average amount left today : $3.30

Percentage of U.S. working men who are covered by employer-provided health insurance : 55

Percentage of U.S. working women who are : 37

Rank of Kansas City, Missouri, among U.S. cities whose employed residents are least likely to call in sick : 1

Chances that an American lives within four miles of a Superfund toxic-waste site : 1 in 3

Number of the world's 20 most populous cities that meet the World Health Organization's clean-air standards : 0

timated square feet of leaks in the concrete container housing the disabled Chernobyl reactor : 11,000 (see page 46)

Percentage change, between 1992 and 1993, in the suicide rate in Russia : +18

Percentage of the 15,500 U.S. soldiers killed since 1979 whose deaths were combat-related : 3

Number of ships that have been attacked by pirates since 1989, worldwide : 523

Value of the prosthetic breasts and bathing suits stolen from a Fort Lauderdale store last year : $11,250

Samples of sand from the world's beaches in the collection of Gilbert Brim, of Vero Beach, Florida : 863

Number of IUDs on display at Toronto's new Museum on the History of Contraception : 319

Number of phrases spoken by Mattel's new Super Talk Barbie : 100,000

Rank of Ruth Bader Ginsburg, among the wealthiest members of the Supreme Court : 1

umber of guests who witnessed Justice Clarence Thomas perform Rush Limbaugh's wedding ceremony last May : 10

Price of holding a wedding at the Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace, in Yorba Linda, California : $1,500

rice paid at auction last year for Pete Rose's good-behavior voucher from an Illinois minimum-security prison : $770

Number of times a baseball is weighed before being used in a major-league game : 5

eed, in miles per hour, of pitches hurled at the heads of human cadavers last year in tests of a new, safer baseball : 70

unds of tomatoes used in the "battle" fought each August at the Festival de la Tomatina, in Buñol, Spain : 880,000

Number of watermelon varieties that are registered trademarks : 6

Weight, in pounds, of the biggest kohlrabi ever grown : 62

Figures cited are the latest available as of June 1994. Sources are listed on page 63

Harper's Index is a registered trademark

SOME PEOPLE NEVER LOSE THEIR COOL.



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STEPPIN' OUT WITH MY BABY,
BODY AND SOUL,
MOONGLOW (WITH KD LANG),
THEY CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY FROM ME (WITH ELVIS COSTELLO),
AND OTHER CLASSICS.
ON COLUMBIA.





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READINGS

[Dispatches]

KIGALI'S WOUNDS, THROUGH A DOCTOR'S EYES

From a series of letters by John Sundin, a forty-four-year-old American surgeon who worked during May and June at the Red Cross hospital in Kigali, Rwanda. For much of that period, the Red Cross hospital was the only medical facility operating in Kigali, and Sundin was the city's only surgeon. Throughout Sundin's time in Rwanda, his letters were on public display at Lulu, a New Haven, Connecticut, coffeehouse that Sundin had frequented last year while working as a clinical instructor at Yale University. Sundin's letters were often posted at the café just hours after he had written them; although the Red Cross hospital had limited supplies and relied on a generator for electricity, it did have a satellite fax machine, which Sundin used to send his letters to a friend at Yale. The friend then posted them at Lulu.

May 13

I'm living and working at a Red Cross field hospital that was set up a month ago in a converted Catholic convent. It is situated on a hill, looking out over the green hills of Rwanda. Rwanda is known as the Switzerland of Africa, but the comparison stops at the landscape. The country is ravaged by a savage war between the government—Hutu—and the "rebels"—Tutsi. Two tribes, two politics—very complicated. It's war, nevertheless, fought not with planes, bombs, tanks, or missiles but rather with rifles and mortars, and with a fair share of less sophisticated weapons: machetes, clubs, and spears.

Today started at a leisurely pace. There are seven people on the medical team, and we have about two hundred patients staying on the floor and in tents. I am the surgeon, and work with two nurses in our two operating rooms, which were classrooms a month ago. Our cases today included the closure of the scalp over the machete-exposed temporal lobe of a boy. Another: finishing touches on a leg blown off last week by a mine. A woman who, four days ago, was nine months pregnant—until someone clubbed her badly and she delivered a dead baby too quickly. She needed her torn vagina sewn up. A leg that I thought would have to be amputated looked okay, so I will look again in a few days. And this was a good day! I've done maybe twenty amputations of legs, hands, and an eye over the last week.

Sometimes the taste of flesh and pus stay on my palate after the day's work. It's hard to sit down and eat meat, but I do because at night the international team—French, Swiss, Dutch, Danish, Finnish, and me (the American)—sits around a table. We eat what we have, and drink what we can, and smoke like there's no tomorrow. Then to sleep to the sounds of gunfire and awake to start again.

May 15

I'm dragging. To the operating room. Cover a machete cut to the skull—four inches long with exposed brain. Nasty. He will probably die. After lunch I return to my room—sleep is what I need. Three weeks here seem like a year. I check my temperature; I have a fever of 101. That's a good sign—it's not stress alone that's making me feel so bad but some tangible pathogen. Water and aspirin and vitamin C. Fever now 102. Fitful sleep, this side of delirium. Stretchers, thousands of stretchers. Like Chaplin's *Modern Times*—an assembly line of stretchers and wounds, wounds, wounds. There's no other doctor here, so I'll have to treat myself. Dangerous. What's wrong with me? The flu? Dengue fever? En-

GOING TOO FAR IN NEW DELHI

tion of unacceptable words and phrases that have been used in Indian legislative proceedings. The list, [illegible] is kept in the secretariat of the Lok Sabha, the lower cham-

Behaving like members of the Chinese parliament

Dealers in disabled cattle
Do not behave like a veterinary doctor
Flaunt it in the face of your godfather Nixon
Fountainhead of corruption

He is talking silly things
I have come to the conclusion that insanity is not a disqualification for this house
Is this a fish market?
Lumpposts (when used for other members)

Senile
Speaking under the influence of ganja and

The biggest black marketer east of Suez
The governor's speech this time is something like a young girl roaming in a heavy winter wearing only a nylon blouse
There should be a public inquiry into the mental attitude of the honorable member
This person who is masquerading as a minister

Weeping dog
You are unfit to be a member of parliament
You will be pissing in your pants

and Lariam. Neither is to be taken willy-nilly. A complication of Fansidar is called Stevens-Johnson syndrome, also known as Watch-every-square-inch-of-your-skin-drop-off syndrome. I saw a photo of it in a medical text. The odds? 1 in 10,000, 1 in 100,000. The odds of being eaten by a lion in New Haven are astronomically low, but if you are the one eaten by an escaped Barnum & Bailey lion then those reassuring odds are only statistics. Lariam—my own stock from Yale—can cause acute psychosis. I'll sleep on it. If my temperature is still up in the morning then I'll do something.

Sleep. Sweet sleep. Sweaty sleep. Mosquito nightmares. The sun again. The thermometer again. Higher, not lower: 103 and pushing 104. Brain-frying time. My head aches to the hair roots. Must treat myself. Fansidar or Lariam? Skin loss or psychosis? What a choice. Convoluted synapses. Feverish thinking. I decide on the Fansidar—all I have to lose is my skin. Better my skin than my mind.

Now the nurse from hell arrives. She's Dutch. Maybe fifty something, and looks like she was sired from stick insects. She's good—don't get me wrong. A veteran of Mogadishu, Kabul, etc. However, I suspect sometimes that she thinks we are in Amsterdam, not Kigali. Limits have to be set.

Anyway, this nurse knocks on my door, enters, and sits on my bed. I know there's trouble brewing. A new patient, twenty something, with a shrapnel wound in his left flank. Blood in his urine. Trouble. The left flank is where the kidney and the big aorta live. I'm dizzy even thinking about getting vertical, but there's no other surgeon. I operate and he may die anyway. I don't operate and he dies for sure. I operate and I am sick for three more days. I don't operate and rest, and can operate in a few days. Too late for him in a few days. Others may come in tomorrow. Must rest. Must get better. Must choose. Crazy place. No lawyers, only limits.

She pushes as she always does: "Well, he will die if we don't operate." I know she's right, but "No, I won't operate today" rolls off my tongue.

Charges: breach of Hippocratic oath. Plea: temporarily crazy place. Sentence: loss of all skin.

May 10

Recovered from my fever and my Fansidar dose with my skin still intact. The flank wound died as expected. The team was eating together at the time of the news, and we all discussed our limits. The insect nurse is pushing to do more and more and more. Get blood donors! Fight to save every double amputee! It's her nature. The rest of the nurses (French, Swiss, Danish, Finnish) are more willing to accept the limits: very little back-up, a sea of wounded, and limited supplies, including blood. Sure we could do a liver resection



m Bombay: Gateway of India, *a collection of photographs by Raghubir Singh that will be exhibited at New York y's Aperture's Burden Gallery in October and simultaneously published by Aperture in book form. The photograph ve shows modern dancers rehearsing; their exaggerated facial expressions are a traditional feature of Indian chore-aphy. Singh lives in London*

if we had to, but with no blood, oxygen, or ventilators, the patient is as good as dead anyway. I sense she faults me for not having operated yesterday—but sometimes, *c'est la vie, c'est la mort*.

May 21

Yesterday a man came in with his personality on the stretcher after getting shrapnel to the head. We have a zombie now. A woman buried alive in a mass grave dug herself out after twelve hours. She's pretty freaked out. I would be.

May 25

Bunkered in today. Mortar hit Red Cross compound next door, killing two and wounding five. Hospital staff leaves and wounded pour in. Fifty more today. Putting them everywhere on the ground now. No more tents. Sixty out of one hundred staff have left. Twenty cases to operate on but tomorrow will be another day of shelling. Phillip, our four-pack-a-day Swiss director, reassured us today that we were *not* a political target, only in a bad geographic place. Politically correct, geographically incorrect.

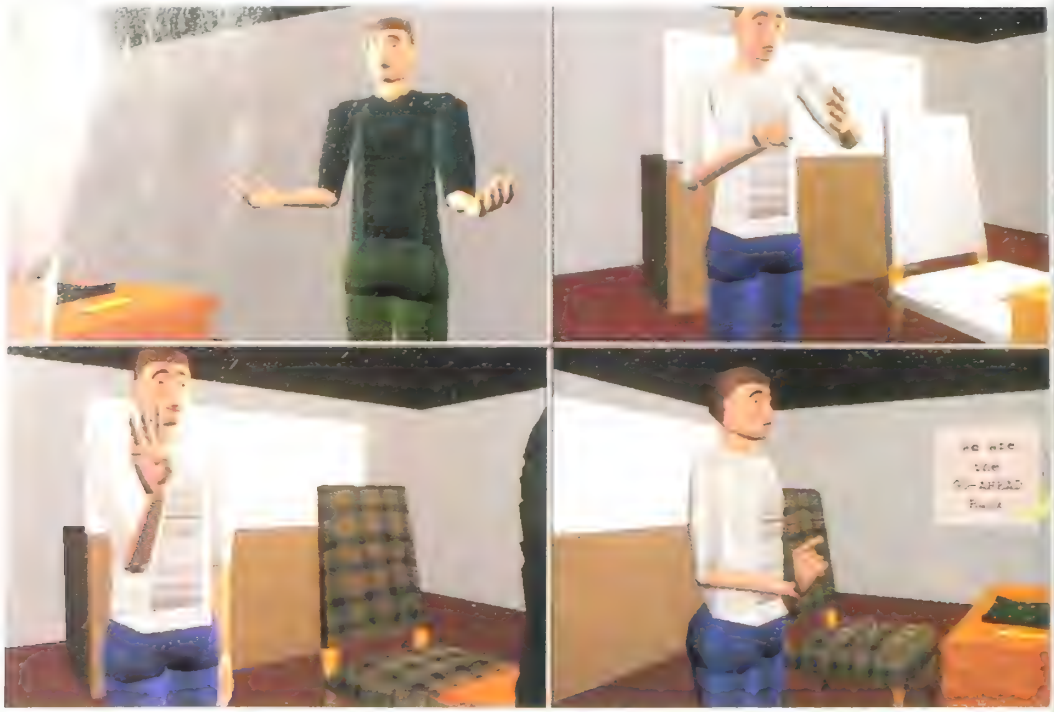
May 27

The situation is evolving—now very, very tense. Today, for the first time, I feared for my life. Shelling all day, bunkered in. Patients lying on stretchers for three days, waiting for surgery and dying. Patients are dropped off at the gate screaming. Before the military hospital was closed down, we were getting 90 percent Tutsi patients, and the Hutus went to the military hospital. Now everyone comes to us. We are becoming the nexus for these warring, century-old tribal hatreds.

Extremists still exist. The Hutu militia showed up at the hospital today with Kalashnikows and clubs with spikes. These are the folks who kill Tutsi for sport—and they're in the hospital! They want to know why we treat Tutsi before Hutu. We can't even tell who is Tutsi and who is Hutu. They want to know what happened to one of their men who was brought in yesterday. He's dead. He was a fat man with a small hole up over his liver. There were five others ahead of him with their bellies blood open. Twenty others with mangled limbs. Now they accuse us of killing this man. They want his body. They take our walkie-talkies. The local staff is in a panic. These are crazed armed killers, the same bunch who killed 150 patients in a Medecins Sans Frontières hospital in Butare. Two staff leave through the back door saying, "It's finished, it's finished." I am finally really scared. We all are.

The militia take two Red Cross workers, An-

WITHDRAWING FROM REALITY



The images above are taken from "Gilbert and George at the Bank," a computer simulation created at the Center f Human Modeling and Simulation at the University of Pennsylvania. The center's main project is a computer m designed to mimic human movement. It is used by engineers to test computer-designed products including bulldoze buildings, and helicopter cockpits. Scientists in the center's "synthetic-conversation group" teach the computer-simulat humans the rules of speech, facial expression, and gesture. Virtual characters like Gilbert and George can then inte act with minimal human oversight. In preparation for the interaction above, George, in green, was told only that wanted to withdraw fifty dollars from the bank. Gilbert, in white, was taught to perform a few basic banking proc dures. Using this information and the rules they had been taught, the characters created a one-minute dialogue, cor plete with audible speech, inflection, and body language. In the first image, at top left, George asks for advice on ho to withdraw his money. In the second, Gilbert suggests that George write a check for fifty dollars and mimes the wr ing of a check. George agrees, but then Gilbert checks George's balance; in the third image, at bottom left, Gilbert te George that he has only three dollars in his account. In the final image, Gilbert sternly explains that three dollars is le than fifty dollars. Some of these images were included in "Virtual Jack," an article about the center in the June issu

dré and Ischelle, to find the body, which is already buried in our own mass grave in the compound. They see the body has no surgery marks. They want his shoes. They say he had a million Rwandese francs in them. Not there now. They have murder in their eyes.

The U.N. arrives, only by coincidence. They want some bandages. The militia leaves with the body. They say they will be back. Foreboding. We have no security anymore. Our local staff has left. The military can't be trusted. They're about to be overrun.

I hid in a corner today, fully expecting to be murdered. They wanted the medical team that's [illegible] treating their people." That's me: I'm the surg[illegible] the only one. This is really no joke. The lo[illegible]ds see [illegible]. "They don't play games," a local says about the militia. The mortars have been a nui[illegible] are marked by killers who live down the road.

At Yale, we used to have weekly morbidity and mortality meetings where the surgeons tore one another apart like pit bulls for as little as a wound infection. Tame compared with the jury in this crazy place.

We are no longer safe, and the medical team knows it. Mortars are one thing, but killers are another. Tomorrow at sunrise we will give our decision: We cannot spend another day in the hospital with Kalashs at our heads. We get U.N. protection or we request evacuation as a group. We just can't do any more. Sacrificing our lives isn't in the job description. The chaos is peaking. Order is dissolving.

I'm too tired to be dramatic, but believe me, the situation is very, very, very tense. Please don't tell my mother.

June 11

It's happening. I'm burning out. I really noticed it yesterday while amputating a rotten leg at the mid-thigh—my back and hands sore, my gag reflex twitching. We had fifteen cases between 9 and 1—arms and legs to cut off or dress, a nose and two eyes blown away, a five-year-old leg connected by a thread of flesh. In the beginning we had a schedule. I saw wounds healing and grafts taking. I used to know the patients. Now there are so many wounded that it's assembly-line first aid.

There's another man on the ward with a very bad leg. He refused amputation a few days ago. He missed his chance. He's got the "gas" now—gas gangrene up to his flank. He'll rot from the leg up, like the others. He'll start to smell and the flies will come to feast and the nurses will say do something and I'll say no. I'll send him to our "hospice" tent and then I'll put him out of his misery.

I've lost my sense of humor. I'm beginning to feel a certain distance. People are beginning to look like insects. Bad sign. The end is not in sight on the military or political front. The end is not in sight for the wounded. But my end is in sight. I'm going to leave at the end of June. Three weeks seem like a very long time. Will I make it? Suddenly the edge has lost its romance.

[Trend Analysis]

AFRICA'S FASHION VICTIMS

From "Fashion Statements," by Emily Prager, in the Styles of the Times section of the May 22 New York Times. *Prager is a fashion critic whose essays appear regularly in the* Times.

Fashion is generated by disparate sources, and one of the surest, if least obvious, is television news. Between April 26, when the South African elections began, and May 6, when Nelson Mandela won, I watched the nightly news without the sound to see what sort of style elements were penetrating our psyches.

What a delight it is to report that the intricate African stylishness, an expertise with line, drapery, texture, inventiveness, and detail that outclasses that of the French, will now become more and more evident to Americans through the nattiness and taste of President Mandela.

He is so stylish! He looks handsome in Western suits and ties. And his high collared patterned shirts, buttoned to the neck, beautifully cut, look at once monarchal and grandfatherly. The shirt he wore for an interview with Peter Jennings, with its black yoke and its black and gray stripes, not only was modern but also looked perfectly suited to the leopard skin and beaded crown he later donned in a bow to history.

[Thank-you Note]

THE WASHINGTON TIGHTROPE

From the form letter sent by Representative Barney Frank (D., Mass.) to people who contribute to his re-election campaign. The note appeared on the editorial page of the June 9 Washington Post.

Writing a thank-you note to campaign contributors in today's climate forces me to emulate Rube Goldberg without pictures. That is, I have to write something that reflects (1) my deep genuine gratitude on a personal level for your sending me a contribution to help me stay in Congress, counterbalanced by (2) my concern that someone reading this might infer something disparaging about your motives in engaging in the sinister process of "campaign finance," itself counterbalanced by (3) my interest in keeping you sufficiently happy with me—or insufficiently unhappy—so that you will continue to contribute, in turn counterbalanced by (4) my fear that the media will denounce me for accepting campaign contributions and thereby subjecting myself to improper influence, albeit from proper people.

Thus, my job is to convey appreciation while affirming that this appreciation will remain wholly intangible and will never take any concrete form whatsoever. It is my task to assure you of my eternal gratitude for your contribution, while simultaneously making sure that everyone understands that I will be eternally unmindful of the fact that you have contributed when any public policy issue comes before me.

I do want to say that I am as appreciative as it is possible to be of your willingness to contribute to my campaign. I know how lucky I have been to have been able to serve first in the state legislature and now in Congress, and not the least part of that good fortune consists of the fundamental decency of those who have been willing to provide me the necessary financial help. Thank you.

Army, the Israeli Army. And

ers. I use to mention fashion and killing in the same sentence. Yet warrior fashion is an ancient and elaborate tradition, and nowhere is it more

imple, pictures of a Somali warlord's teenage gunmen suddenly flashed onto the television

pants, probably army castoffs, they wore long scarfs around their necks and waist cinchers (the kind women in the United States wore under dresses in the late 1950s). Where they had gotten the waist cinchers no one seemed to know, but the image of teenage boys brandishing rifles and wearing this odd, Madonna-ish feminine accoutrement was terrifying, and firmly in the tradition of cross-dressing warriors in tribal Africa, Asia, and North America.

In a similar but less spectacular way, a teenage Rwandan gunman appeared on the screen recently wearing faded, obviously cast-off camouflage, a long scarf he must have made around his neck, and a beige, monklike pointy hood on his head. He flailed into camera range, somehow managing to brandish two sticks and a rifle, a crazed look in his eyes. It was a horribly stylish and most chillingly effective outfit.

FIRE WHEN READY

From a brochure for "How to Legally Fire Employees With Attitude Problems," a traveling seminar for business executives and managers offered by the

based in Overland Park, Kansas. Each six-hour seminar, which costs $139 to attend, is led by a presenter with "expertise in counseling, managing, and firing employees with bad attitudes."

ARE YOU STUCK

• Susan seems to work at only two speeds—slow and stop. She performs the minimum amount of work required, complains about her workload, and rushes out of the office at five o'clock on the dot every day. She makes her deadlines, but you have to push her constantly. Can you dismiss her for being a foot-dragger?

• Tom is sharp as a tack and performs like gangbusters. The only problem is he thinks he knows *everything*. He always insists on doing things *his* way, openly criticizes anyone who disagrees with him, including you, and locks horns with co-workers every week. You've counseled Tom about his abrasive attitude, but he says that *you're* the one with a problem, not him. Can you terminate Tom for being so cocky?

• Lisa has been whining since the day she was transferred into your department. She moans about company policies, her paycheck, her health, and everything else. And when you counsel Lisa about her negative attitude, she complains to *your* boss about *you*. Lisa is really driving you up the wall, and her negative attitude is starting to rub off on others. Can you legally fire Lisa for being a whiner?

In each case, the answer is YES, you can. After you attend this one-day seminar, you'll be able to fire problem employees legally, safely, and confidently.

SIT! HEEL!



- Three tips that'll tell you when an employ
- Legally A way to screen and [illegible] employees who bad-mouth you behind your back
- Important! Employees who are "protected" by law and the rules to follow when firing them
- Three rules for dealing with hypochondriacs who [illegible] don't violate [illegible] leave policy
- Three security measures you should take before dismissing a worker you think is emotionally unstable
- How to take the guilt out of firing an employee with an attitude problem

[Exchange]

PUTTING A PRICE ON PAIN

From "Paradoxes of Commercial Worship," an essay by Kat Sunlove, a [illegible] dominatrix, in issue number 7 of Gauntlet, *a biannual journal published in Springfield, Pennsylvania, dedicated to "exploring the limits of free expression." Sunlove is the publisher of* Spectator, *a weekly newsmagazine about sex; in her* Gauntlet *essay, she includes a letter from one of her readers and her response, both of which are excerpted below.*

Dear Mistress Kat,

I was particularly interested in your recent column in which you discussed the problems that face a professional dominant, specifically people not showing up for appointments. While I have no desire to excuse anyone who is rude and inconsiderate, it is my opinion that these problems can be attributed to [illegible] fees. As you are aware, the going rate for a one-hour session is $150 and up. For most working-class and middle-class men, this presents a real obstacle. It is a little difficult to justify spending that much for an hour or so of pleasure, intense as that pleasure may be. After all, for the cost of one B&D [bondage and domination] session I can go skiing all day with a date.

On the other hand, I can see why the cost is so high. The professional dominant has so many appointments who don't show up that she must charge those who do show up a lot to make up for those who don't.

But consider this: If a professional made her sessions more affordable by cutting the cost in half, she would have fewer men who were intimidated by the cost *and* more regulars, and she would probably come out ahead.

[illegible] are a tiny minority, and it is important for us to [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] that they cut *their* fees in half? Tell them they'll do just as well by seeing twice as many clients and see what they say. Professional dominance is a high-risk, high-expense occupation. There's no paid medical coverage, no paid vacations, no profit-sharing, and no retirement benefits. Dungeon rentals are high; costumes, costly. Like others in a service industry, the dominance-service provider must deal with all kinds of unpleasant people. I think dominants should be well compensated for their time and effort.

In addition to all those factors, domination, when done well, requires the use of high libidinal energies. For example, yesterday I saw a client for the first time in months. He was a former

[Bill]

FLORIDA DISCIPLINE: BEAT, DON'T MAIM

From a bill passed in April by the Florida legislature that gives parents the legal right to use corporal punishment to discipline their children. Although 143 of the 160 legislators voted in favor of the bill, Governor [illegible] vetoed it.

Corporal punishment of a child by a parent does not in itself constitute child abuse. Corporal punishment may be considered excessive or abusive when it results in any of the following injuries:

a. Sprains, dislocations, or cartilage damage
[illegible]
c. Brain or spinal-cord damage
d. Intracranial hemorrhage or injury to other internal organs
e. Asphyxiation, suffocation, or drowning
f. Injury resulting from the use of a deadly weapon
g. Burns or scalding
h. Cuts, lacerations, punctures, or bites
i. Permanent or temporary disfigurement
j. Permanent or temporary loss or impairment of a bodily part or function
k. Significant bruises or welts

e who had called me the day
n. I w, the conversation really
decided to see him and have

om to arrive after I had been to my
and was nice and sweaty. I had him
nipits, my feet, and my inner thighs
engage. For further amusement, follow-
own energy, I worked over his nipples
e nipple clamps and weights. The energy be-
tween us was roaring! Believe me, this was "real
S&M" for us both.

Afterward, he was completely spent, content though exhausted. But the point is, SO WAS I. To suggest that a dominant cut her fee in half and see twice as many clients ignores the fact that each session, if done right, will drain much of her available creative energy. If she sees six clients in a day instead of three, quality will inevitably be
ed.

Of course, I am aware of a small minority of professional dominants who are, to put it bluntly, rip-off artists. They take your money, beat you with a wet shoestring, and send you away with no expectation of ever seeing you again. I sincerely wish these women would find another way to make a living.

As for you, Bob, I think your letter betrays an underlying classist, sexist attitude toward the professional dominant. She's a "whore" to you, a woman who has no right to a comfortable income and lifestyle. She should cut her price so she can service more boys. The true submissive, I believe, would feel just the opposite. The value of
mistress is priceless.

Mistress Kat

[Questionnaire]

MACAULAY CULKIN'S BLUE PERIOD

From a questionnaire completed by Macaulay Culkin, the thirteen-year-old star of Home Alone, *in the December 1993 issue of* Disney Adventures, *a monthly for children published by the Walt Disney Company.*

I love to eat NOTHING.
HING cracks me up.
Y really bugs me.
s to listen to

6. Having
7. NOBODY is my all-time hero.

[Experiment]

ARE TODAY'S ACTORS UP TO SNUFF?

From "Snuff Films? No Really . . . ," by Eric Spitznagel, in the April/May issue of The Third Word, *a bimonthly arts magazine published in Chicago. As an experiment to determine how desperate unemployed actors are for work, Spitznagel posted an audition notice at various Chicago theaters for a fictitious film called* Dangerous Love. *When actors called about the notice, he "subtly inform[ed]" them that they would be auditioning for a "snuff film," a movie that includes an actual murder. Although most respondents "called [Spitznagel's] bluff," a few "not only believed [him], but actually seemed . . . interested." Spitznagel's conversation with one male caller is excerpted below.*

SPITZNAGEL: Have you acted in adult videos before?

CALLER: Just some amateur stuff. Under a different name.

SPITZNAGEL: That's great. You'll fit in fine.

CALLER: I'm also pursuing a serious acting career.

SPITZNAGEL: Yes, I see. Tell me, have you ever heard the expression "snuff film"?

CALLER: Yeah.

SPITZNAGEL: What are your feelings about them?

CALLER: I haven't seen any, but I think they're wrong.

SPITZNAGEL: That's perfect. That's exactly the kind of attitude we're looking for.

CALLER: Why do you ask?

SPITZNAGEL: Well, I want to start by assuring you that we are absolutely not going to be doing a snuff film.

CALLER: Yeah?

SPITZNAGEL: But there will be some scenes that are *reminiscent* of snuff films.

CALLER: How do you mean?

SPITZNAGEL: Nobody is going to get hurt, I can promise you that. But some of it will be violent in nature.

CALLER: How violent?

SPITZNAGEL: It depends on the actors. We are a production company that insists on mutual consent.

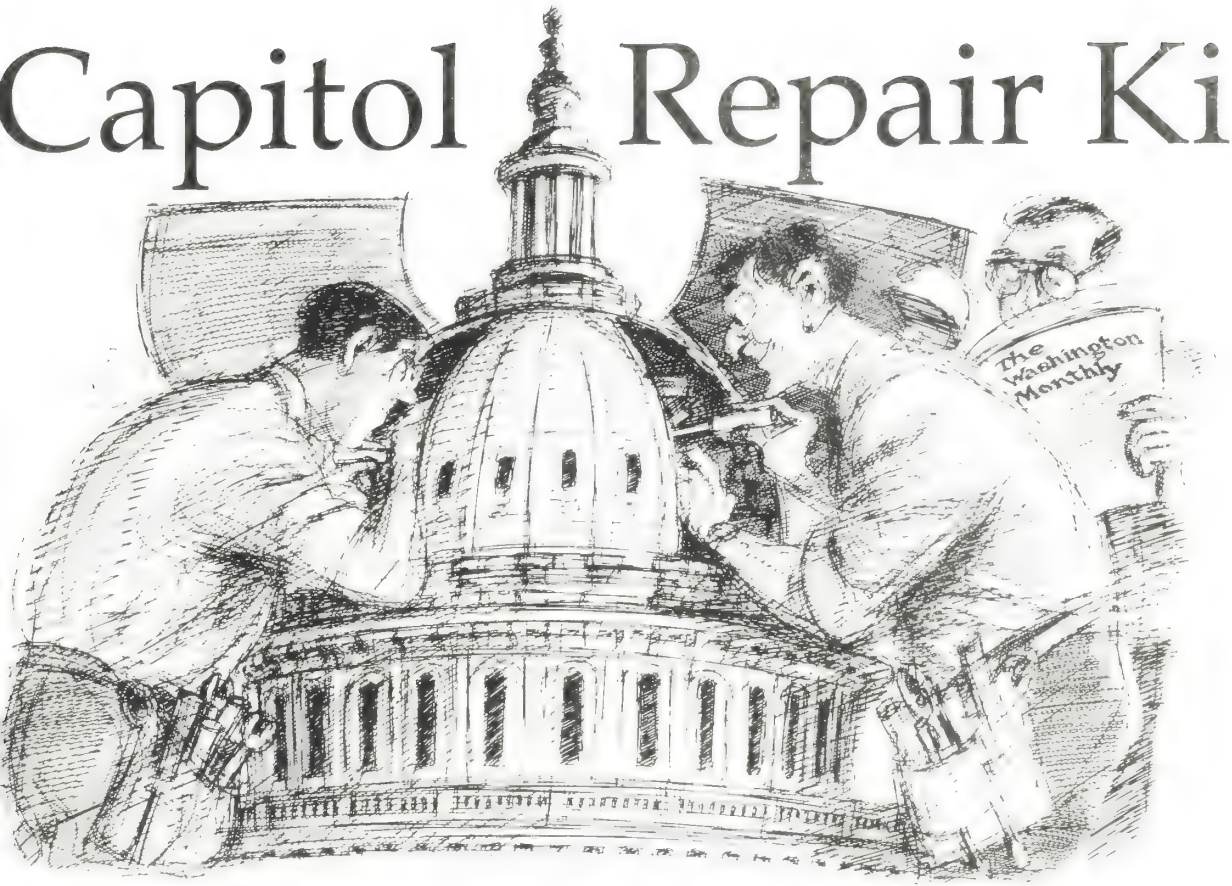
CALLER: So there isn't going to be anyone actually dying or anything?

SPITZNAGEL: Let me put it this way: This is a business ripe with opportunity. It all depends on the talent and their interests.

CALLER: I'm not interested in killing anybody.

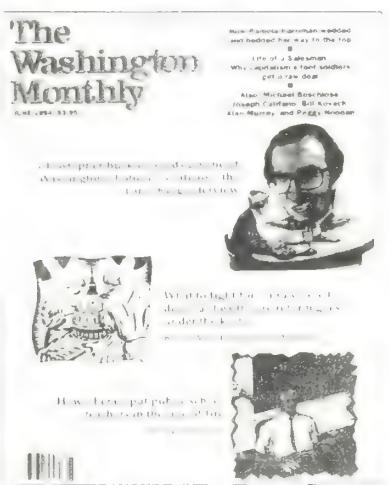
SPITZNAGEL: Good for you. I should hope not. And I'm certain we have a minor role that you'd be just perfect for.

Capitol Repair Kit



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HOLLYWOOD'S FEAR OF REVENGE

An interview with Quentin Tarantino in Grand [illegible] *about* [illegible] *The* [illegible] *conducted by Dennis Hopper, the actor-filmmaker who directed* Easy Rider *and* The Last Movie *and starred in* Apocalypse Now *and* Blue Velvet. *Hopper's film* Colors, *about* [illegible] *starring Robert Duvall and Sean Penn, will be released this month.*

The Harrison Ford movie *Patriot Games* is the first movie I've ever seen that portrays the Irish Republican Army in a positive light. It's also the first movie I've ever seen that portrays the British in a negative light. I'm not concerned with political correctness, but if you're going to make a revenge movie, you've got to let the [illegible] empathize with that. So you set it up: the lead guy gets screwed over. And [illegible] kill the bad guys and [illegible]. They've got to pay for their crimes. If they're not killed without mercy after that, that's fine, but you've got to give me what I paid for. If you're going to invite me to a dance, you've gotta let me dance.

I don't [illegible] that the bad guy actually has a legitimate reason to want revenge against Harrison Ford. Ford caused the [illegible] accidentally, but it's a legitimate reason to create a vendetta against him. But the studio was so scared that we would identify with the bad guy even *that* much—to the point where [illegible] that they turned him into a psychopath. Then he bothers [illegible] Harrison Ford wants revenge.

So now you've got these two guys who both want revenge, which is an interesting place to be. [illegible] in the same [illegible] boat, and they do the thing that I despised the most: Harrison Ford hits the guy and the guy falls on an anchor and it kills him. And it's like [illegible] saying, "Well, he killed him with his own hands, [illegible] so he can go back to his daughter and his wife and still be an okay guy. He caused the death but it was kind of accidental."

As far as I'm concerned, the minute you kill your bad guy by having him fall on something, you should go to movie jail. You've broken the law [illegible]

[illegible] Is that legal?

SPITZNAGEL: Absolutely. We have the full cooperation of the mayor and the city.

CALLER: So I'm not going to get into trouble?

SPITZNAGEL: Not at all. This is a legitimate enterprise, like any other.

[pause]

CALLER: So nobody is gonna get killed?

SPITZNAGEL: I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to go into the details. If you're not interested, I completely understand and I thank you for your time.

[pause]

CALLER: Can I get paid in advance?

SPITZNAGEL: Yes, of course. We wouldn't have it any other way.

[Interview]

THE GREAT AMERICAN HOLLOW

From an interview with Ken Kesey in the Spring issue of The Paris Review. *Kesey is the author of the novels* One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest *and* Sometimes a Great Notion, *among others. In 1964 Kesey, Neal Cassady, and a band of "merry pranksters" toured the country by bus while taking LSD and other drugs; their trip was the subject of Tom Wolfe's book* The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test. *The interview was conducted by Robert Faggen, an assistant professor of literature at Claremont McKenna College.*

ROBERT FAGGEN: After you wrote *Sometimes a Great Notion*, you set out on the bus. What did you want to explore?

KEN KESEY: What I explore in all my work: wilderness. Settlers on this continent from the beginning have been seeking wilderness and its wildness. The explorers and pioneers sought that wildness because they could sense that in Europe everything had become locked tight. Things were all owned by the same people, and all of the roads went in the same direction forever. When we got here there was a sense of possibility and new direction, and it had to do with wildness. Throughout the work of James Fenimore Cooper there is what I call the American terror. It's very important to our literature, and it's important to who we are: the terror of the Hurons out there, the terror of the bear, the avalanche, the tornado—whatever may be over the next horizon.

As we came to the end of the continent, we manufactured our terror. We put together the bomb. Now we don't even have the bomb hanging over our heads to terrify us and give us reason to dress up in manly deerskin and go forth to battle it. There's something we're afraid of, but it

[ap]

THE GEOGRAPHY OF FEAR



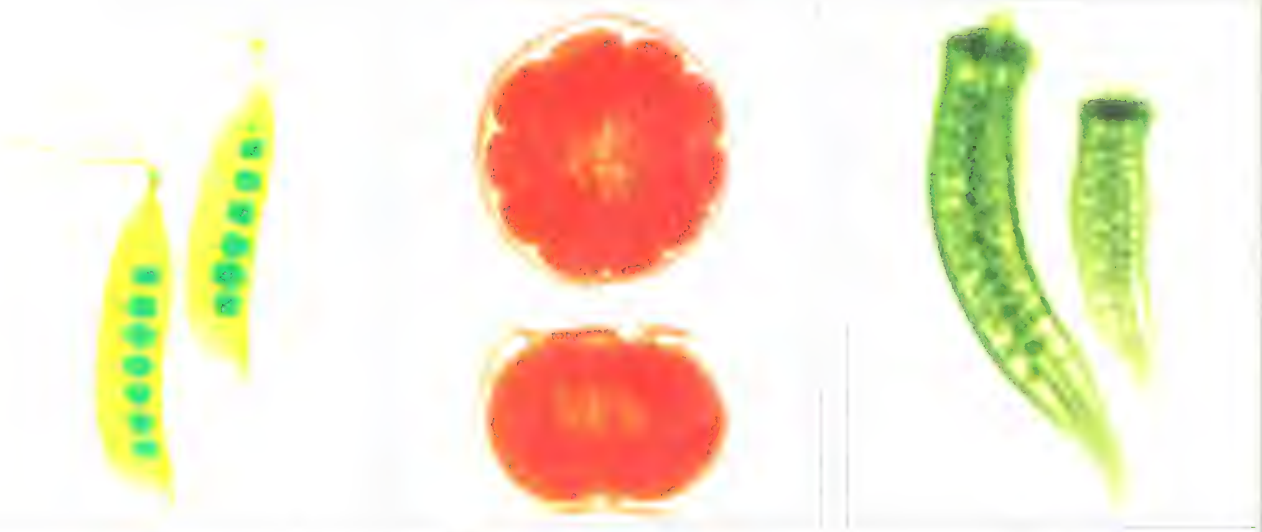
om "Are You Safe Where You Live?" a map of the United States produced by City Seekers, an Olympia, Wash-ton, consulting firm that researches cities and towns for people who are looking to relocate. The map highlights various hazards in each state: the yellow symbols mark nuclear reactors; green asterisks mark hazardous ste sites; red, ocher, and brown dots mark prisons; empty circles mark sites of past earthquakes; and the pur- numbers indicate the state's cancer mortality rate per 100,000 people. The green dots with suns mark "pow-vortices and ancient sanctuaries," places that Native Americans consider sacred. The map costs $19; for $79, lient can order a personalized "city match," which recommends two cities based on a questionnaire completed the client.

doesn't have the clarity of the terror of the Hurons or the hydrogen bomb during the Cold War. Now it's fuzzy, and it's fuzzy because the people who are in control don't want you to draw a bead on the real danger, the real terror in this country.

FAGGEN: What is the "real terror" in America?

KESEY: When people ask me about LSD, I always make a point of telling them you can have the shit scared out of you with LSD because it exposes something, something hollow. Let's say you have been getting on your knees and bowing and worshiping; suddenly you take LSD, and you look, and there's just a hole, there's nothing there. The Catholic Church fills this hole with candles and flowers and litanies and opulence. The Protestant Church fills it with hand-wringing and pumped-up squeezing emotions because they can't afford the flowers and the candles. The Jews fill this hole with weeping and brow-beating and beseeching of the sky: "How long, how long are you gonna treat us like this?" The Muslims fill it with rigidity and guns and a militant ethos. But all of us know that that's not what is supposed to be in that hole.

After I had been at Stanford for two years, I got into LSD. I began to see that the books I thought were the true accounting books—my grades, how I'd done in other schools, how I'd performed at jobs, whether I had paid off my car or not—were not at all the true books. There were other books that were being kept, real books. In those books is the real accounting of your life. And the mind says, "Oh, this is titillating." So you want to take some more LSD and see what else is there. And soon I had the experience that everyone who's ever dabbled in psychedelics has. A big hand grabs you by the back of the neck, and you hear a voice saying, "You want to see the books? Okay, here are the books." And it pushes your face right down into all of your cruelties and all of your meanness, all the times that you have been insensitive, intolerant, racist, sexist. It's all there, and you read it. You can't take your nose up off the books. You hate them. You hate who you are. You hate the fact



[illegible] right: [illegible] peas, a mandarin orange and okra. The photograph [illegible] process. Whitney's work appears in the July/August issue of Saber[illegible]

[illegible] for I can keep track just as you feared. You hate it, but you can't move your arms [illegible] any more again you start trying to juggle the books. You start trying to [illegible]. Then you get the surprise [illegible] that you're leaning [illegible] and you feel the lack [illegible]. The thing that was forcing you to look at the books is no longer there. There's only a big hollow, the great American wild hollow, which is scarier than hell, scarier than purgatory or Satan. It's the fact that there isn't any hell and there isn't any purgatory, there isn't any Satan. And all you've got is Sartre [illegible] than guilt. And if you've got courage, you go [illegible]

[illegible] the new wilderness?

KESEY: That's the new wilderness. It's the same old wilderness, just no longer up on that hill or around that bend, or in that gully. It's because there are no more hills and gullies that the hollow is there, and you've got to explore the hollow with faith. If you don't have faith that there is something down there, pretty soon when you're in the hollow, you begin to get scared and start shaking. That's when you stop [illegible] and [illegible] press kits and Valium. Real warriors like William Burroughs or Leonard Cohen or Wallace Stevens examine the hollow as well as [illegible] dark, and yet come out with poetry.

[Interview]

THE LAST VICTIMS

From a channeled interview with Rojo, the "spokesperson" for the Rock People of Sedona, a group of conscious rocks in Sedona, Arizona. The interview was conducted by Rosemary Brown Sanders, a Carmel, California, psychic, who has been channeling the Rock People of Sedona since 1991. The interview appeared in the May issue of the Sedona Journal of Emergence!, *a monthly.*

SANDERS: It's wonderful to see you.

ROJO: It seems like only yesterday that we were with each other, but, as you know, rocks do not count time. Since you left us, we have done much work with salamanders and lizard beings as well as with frog people and also with what you would call centipedes. They are very excited to meet you. I have taken a position as, how would you say, ambassador of the Rocks of the Earth, and we have instigated a colonization of rock brothers and sisters throughout not only the world but the universe.

SANDERS: When I was on Mt. Shasta [in California], I was very much drawn to one particular rock. Can you tell me why I was so drawn to this rock that I had to pick it up and take it home with me?

ROJO: Your rock is very, how would you say, intelligent. It was in the center of the earth, and it took a long time to make its way to the surface so that it could be there when you arrived. It has a strong affinity with you. It has searched its way out of the earth in order to be in your presence.

SANDERS: What am I supposed to do with this rock? I felt kind of guilty bringing it home, and yet I knew it wanted to come with me.

ROJO: It is important that you always ask permission of the rocks before you take them. And you will hear inside them something that says, "Yes, take me. Take me, please." This way we do not worry when you pick us up, for we know that we are loved. Children who pick us up love us immensely. Most adults go around without even noticing us. They stand on us and sweep us away and toss us into piles. They do not recognize us as individual consciousnesses, which we are.

SANDERS: Rojo, when a rock shatters, does it hurt?

ROJO: Yes, it hurts very much. It would be like taking a person and removing his arms. It is very penetrating in its effect. In what you would call jewelry making, rocks are tumbled and taken out of their natural state. It would be like putting you in a dryer. How would it feel? Very bruising. It is the truth that rocks do bruise.

[Reflection]

A BIOGRAPHER'S SECOND THOUGHTS

From "The Embarrassing Pursuit," a biographer's misgivings before and after researching the life of Robert Lowell," by Ian Hamilton, in the April 29 issue of the Times Literary Supplement. *The essay also appears in Hamilton's* Walking Possession: Essays and Reviews 1968–1993, *published by Bloomsbury, in London. Hamilton is the author of* Robert Lowell: A Biography, *among other works.*

My life and times as a literary biographer began about fifteen years ago, in 1979, when I started researching a biography of the American poet Robert Lowell, who had died two years earlier, aged sixty, at the height of his considerable fame. In the summer of 1979, I was taken by Lowell's widow, Caroline Blackwood, to the house in Ireland where she and Lowell had been lodging during the last weeks of his life. It was a chaotic visit, for one reason or another, and I didn't learn a great deal—but I did come away with a few relics: postcards and letters written to the poet, some fragments of unpublished verse, an old passport, and a couple of photographs.

When I got back to London, I sat at my desk examining my treasure trove. What did these bits and pieces mean? Where did they fit? Who were these strange—to me—people who signed themselves "Blair" or "Frank" or "Peter"?

I got to imagining what it would be like if some biographer were to inspect the contents of the desk in front of me, my desk, as I had just inspected Lowell's. What would such a biographer make of—for example—this note from my mother complaining that she hadn't heard from me in weeks, this letter from my former wife [illegible]

[Palette]

THE SHADE OF THINGS TO COME

From the 1995 "Consumer Color Directions Palette," a list of forty-one "trend-driven" colors issued last year by the Color Marketing Group, an association of 1,400 "design and color professionals." The Color Marketing Group convenes twice a year to choose a "forecast palette reflecting the consensus regarding future color movement." The colors below are expected to gain in popularity over the next year.

Espresso: A rich, warm, roasted brown evocative of the comfort, conversation, and neighborly feeling found in a coffeehouse.

Craft: This brown reflects the themes of arts and crafts, responsibility for the environment, and recyclability.

Cabernet: This rich, deep, berry-toned red adds perceived value to automotive exteriors.

Purple Haze: Spiritual and gender-neutral; it layers purple with a smoky complexity.

Grunge: This gray-green reflects the youthful rebellion against establishment brights.

Saffron: This softened orange is more lovable and lovable than the hot oranges of the past.

Provence: A universal blue, equally at home in the French countryside or an Amish barn.

Kilim: Borrowed from ancient textiles, this sun-washed red links us to our multicultural heritage.

Smithsonian: This weathered brick bridges yellow, orange, and red. It adds a warm, gentle punch to our Forecast Colors.

Flutterby Blue: Clean and vibrant, this reddish blue hints at the iridescence in the wing of a passing butterfly.

H₂O Blue: An aquatic addition to our palette, it speaks of clear, clean waters and inspires new hope for the future.

more interesting she would become. He would question all my friends and relatives about her, this mysterious Priscilla "who clearly meant so much to the aging Hamilton as he approached the end." Before long, my friends and relatives would start believing in her, too. "If it hadn't been for that curious Priscilla business, who knows what he might have gone on to achieve." And so it would continue.

The experience of reading other people's private correspondence is always faintly thrilling and delinquent. Biographers, if they are honest, will admit that the pleasure they take in this branch of their research is not all to do with literary scholarship. In the Lowell case, there was a slightly embarrassing example. A few years before his death, Lowell had sold to the Harvard Library his "archive"—an extensive collection of his manuscripts and notebooks and a vast pile of correspondence, the bulk of it being letters that had been addressed to him. From these letters I was able to build up a fairly reliable map of his relationships over the years. The Priscilla factor, as I now called it, had to be kept in mind.

One day in the Harvard Library, I came across a handful of letters written to Lowell by a woman we'll call G. It was evident from these letters that G. and Lowell had had an affair, an affair that had meant a lot to her at the time. What it had meant to Lowell was, as usual, not entirely clear. I later tracked down G.—in London, as it happened, although she was American—and asked her if she would be interviewed about her relationship with Lowell. She agreed, and I—and my tape recorder—went along to see her. Not knowing what I knew, she had prepared a presentation in which she and Lowell had been, as she put it, merely "literary friends." They had talked a lot about books, they had admired each other's writings, and that was all there was to it. She knew "very little," she said, about his "private life." The interview proceeded along these genteel lines for about half an hour, until I could stand it no longer. I said to her: *But I've seen your letters.* There was a silence, and G.'s mind was evidently racing: "Which letters?" "How?" "What did they say?" She seemed genuinely stricken, as if I had callously, or stupidly, broken an important spell. The silence went on for a bit longer, and then I switched off the machine. "You mean, he actually *sold* them to Harvard University?" she asked. I tried to make it better by explaining that he had also sold several thousand other letters, and that most writers did the same, but she was half-listening. "All right, I'll tell you what really happened," she said. But she told it with bitterness, and one could not be sure that this bitterness did not have more to do with Lowell's treatment of her *letters* than with his treatment of *her* thirty years before.

SMALL GOVERNMENT, BIG ROMANCE

Among the unsolicited letters included in an advertisement for The Essence of Political Persuasion, *a set of three cassette tapes by Michael Emerling, a libertarian author. According to Emerling, hundreds of people have written him letters about "the difference the tapes made in their lives." The advertisement appeared in the Winter issue of* Liberty, *a libertarian bimonthly published in Port Townsend, Washington.*

Dear Michael,

My husband is a member of the Libertarian Party. He talks to everyone about politics and economics, but recently he stopped talking to me. He stopped touching me. I felt like he didn't really love me anymore. I read a few books on relationships and communication. I went to a counselor. I tried everything. Nothing worked.

One night, while he was at a libertarian meeting, I saw your *Essence of Political Persuasion* tapes [illegible] I listened to a couple of the first tape. Your recipes for creating rapport made sense to me. When my husband got home, I told him I loved him and asked him if he would help me practice your rapport recipes with me. The next thing I knew we were talking about us, our relationship, as never before. We [illegible] We talked for three hours. It seemed like minutes.

I finally understand why my husband is a libertarian. I've read eight libertarian books in six weeks, and now I'm a libertarian, too.

Michael, your *Essence of Political Persuasion* tapes saved my marriage.

P.S. We are expecting our first baby.



s. Gray on a Sunday *(left)* and Sina and Dorothy *(right)*, *by Eileen Doman. Doman makes paintings based on her fam-*
s black-and-white snapshot photos taken over the last fifty years. Snapshots, an exhibit of Doman's work, was on display
spring at New York's Ricco/Maresca Gallery. She lives in Genoa, Illinois.

[Memoir]

MY FATHER'S OTHER LIFE

From "Never Let Me Down," by Susan J. Miller, in Granta *number 47. Miller, whose memoir is her first published work, lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

One night, at an hour that was normally my bedtime, I got all dressed up, and my mother and father and I drove into New York, down to the Half Note, the jazz club on Hudson Street. I was thirteen, maybe fourteen, just beginning teenagehood, and had never gone anywhere that was "nightlife." I had heard jazz all my life, on records or the radio, my father beating out time on the kitchen table, the steering wheel, letting out a breathy "Yeah" when the music soared and flew. When they were cooking, when they really swung, it transported him; he was gone, inside the music. I couldn't go on this trip with him, but I thought I could understand it. It seemed to me that anyone could, hearing that music. Bird, Diz, Pres, Sweets, Al, Zoot. It was my father's music, though he himself never played a note.

I knew the players, for about the only friends my parents had were musicians and their wives. They fascinated me: their pants with black satin stripes, their battered horn cases. When I was a little kid, I'd lie in bed listening to them talk their hip talk in the next room. I knew I was the only kid in our white neighborhood to be overhearing words like "man" and "cat" and "groove," and jokes that were this irreverent and black. I knew they were cool and I loved it.

At the Half Note that night, the three of us walked through the door, and the owner appeared, all excited to see my father, and in the middle of this smoky nightlife room, he kissed my hand. This was real life, the center of something. We sat down. In front of us, on a little stage, were Jimmy Rushing, a powerful singer, and two sax players, Al Cohn and Zoot Sims, whom I'd known all my life. And there was a whole roomful of people slapping the tables, beating out time, breathing "Yeah" at the great moments, shaking their heads, sometimes snapping their fingers, now and then bursting out with "Play it, man," or "Sing it." When the break came, Zoot sat down with us and ate a plate of lasagna or something and didn't say much except for these dry asides that were so funny I couldn't bear it. And there was my dad: these men were his friends, his buddies. They

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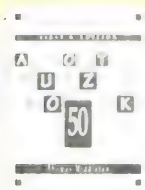
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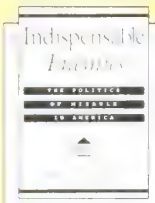
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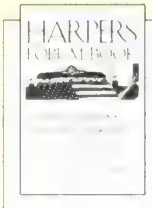
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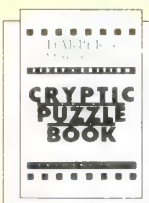
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sphere, our lack of money, our many moves. The addiction was the thread that tied everything together, but we didn't know that such a thread existed, and so decisions seemed insanely arbitrary, my mother's emotions frighteningly hysterical. She was terribly depressed, sometimes desperate. I regularly found her sitting, eyes unfocused, collapsed amid the disorder of a household she was too overwhelmed to manage.

My father was from Brighton Beach, Brooklyn, and earned his living dressing windows in women's clothing stores in and around New York City. Being a window dresser was a touch creative, but most importantly it meant he didn't have to fit in; all he had to do was get the job done. He was a man of socially unacceptable habits. He was fat, he picked his teeth, he burped, he farted, he bit his nails until he had no nails and then he chewed his fingers, eating himself up. He was a high-octane monologuer, a self-taught high-school dropout who constantly read, thought, and talked politics and culture, gobbling up ideas, stuffing himself as fast as he could—with everything.

By the time I was in college my father was taking amphetamines, LSD, mescaline, peyote, whatever he could get. I would receive long letters from him, written when he was coming down from an acid or mescaline trip. Often he tripped alone in the living room of our New Jersey apartment, awake all night, listening to records, writing and thinking while my mother slept. I read pages of his blocky, slanted printing, about how the world is a boat and we are all sinking. Usually I threw them away without finishing them, scanning his stoned raps in front of the big, green metal trash can in the college mail room, picturing him in the living room with the sun rising, wired up, hunched over the paper, filling up the page, wanting me to know all the exciting things he had discovered. Part of me wanted to hear them and love him—and indeed did love him for taking the acid, for taking the chance. But another part shut down, unable to care.

He would not have been a good father even if he hadn't been an addict. By his own admission, he came to parenthood ignorant of love and acquainted only with hate.

My mother told me about my grandmother Esther, the wicked witch of Brighton Beach. According to my mother, my grandmother despised men. She lavished attention on her daughter, my father's only sibling. She dealt in machinations, lies, and deceptions, feeding the fires of hate between father and son, sister and brother. When my father did well in school, his mother scorned him. She tore up a citation he'd won—and then spat on it. She never kissed him, except on the day he went off to boot camp. His mother and my mother, then his young wife, were standing on the plat-



From The Spectator.

form, saying good-bye. Seeing the other mothers tearfully embracing their sons, his mother was shamed into touching hers: she pecked his cheek.

My father only once told me a story about himself and his mother. I was in college at the time. The two of us were driving on the highway on a beautiful, clear, cold winter day. My father was behind the wheel. Fourteen years earlier, in 1956, his father had died in the hospital while my father and his mother, Esther, were visiting him. My father took Esther home to Brooklyn, where she asked him for a favor. There were some terms in her will she wanted to review. Would he read it out loud to her? (Even in Yiddish my grandmother was illiterate.) My father was tired and upset and somewhat puzzled that his mother wished to go over her will on the night of her husband's death, but he agreed. The will turned out to be simple: Esther's house and savings were to go to Sarah, her daughter. Then he heard himself, the fly in the web, reading: And to my son, Sidney, I leave nothing, because he is no good.

My father stared at the road ahead.

Why, I cried, would she have you read that to her? What did you do?

My father's voice was tired and bitter. She wanted to see what I would do, he said; she wanted to watch my reaction. Ma, I said, I gotta go home now. I'm tired and it's late. I didn't want to show her how bad I felt, I didn't want to give her the satisfaction. I didn't care about the money. Let my fucking sister have the money. But why did she have to write that sentence? Why did she have me read it?

My father started to cry. He had never cried in front of me. His hands loosened their grip on the wheel. The car began to drift into the opposite lane, across the white unbroken line.

Look out, I yelled. He grabbed the wheel and turned us toward safety. Look out, I yelled, and he did. Look out, I yelled, for what else could I have said?

In August 1988, my father was diagnosed with liver cancer, the result of chronic hepatitis, a disease associated with heroin addiction. The doctors predicted he would live for five months. He tried chemotherapy, ate a macrobiotic diet, enrolled in an experimental holistic treatment program. When I visited him in November, it was clear that things would not turn around.

My mother, who had stuck by him through everything, was still by his side. He was eager to share his latest revelation. A social worker in the treatment program had asked him what he would miss most when he died. He said: I told her that, yeah, sure, I'll miss my wife and my kids, but what I'll miss most is the music. The music is the only thing that's never let me down.

That the revelation would hurt us—my mother especially—never occurred to him. He never kept his thoughts to himself, except when he felt the need to express them. Neither my mother nor I said a word. The statement was the truth of him—not only what he said but also the fact that he would say it to us, and say it without guilt, without apology, without regret.

[Story]

IN LOVE WITH ME

By Padgett Powell. From the Spring issue of Bomb, *a quarterly published in New York City. Powell's story "Trick or Treat" appeared in the November 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

"You have a central pluck and resilience which is good but is made more interesting by a slight wounded edge—like a shucked oyster. I like you for this trembling edge, my shucked oyster."

—A writer in love with me.

"You are the most intelligent woman I've ever met—except Hannah Arendt."

—A librarian in love with me.

"I can't be kilt."

—A wrecker driver in love with me.

"Teach me how to laugh."

—A drunk in love with me.

"Teach me how to laugh."

—A serious young man in love with me.

"Don't tell anyone I'm a county planner."

—A county planner in love with me.

"If I were younger you'd frighten me."

—Another writer in love with me.

"If you'll get out of that chair I can sweep."

—A determined lady in love with me.

"If you'll let me I can spray."

—A bug man in love with me.

"I'd like to protect you."

—The serious young man in love with me.

"He likes it better when you laugh at his jokes than when he laughs at you."

—My other writer in love with me, speaking of the first.

"I can go clockwise but if I go clockwise I fall every time."

—A Cirque du Death motorcycle rider in love with me.

Any of these lovers is capable of speaking at greater length if I choose to let him. The wrecker driver, the daredevil cyclist, and the bug man are more articulate, by far, than the librar-

ian and the two writers. The serious young man

l life.

at meal's done. He stops chewing long enough to

for me why Mr. Leno has the world's smallest

eat Camembert and water crackers with the li-

ings. The librarian stops chewing at nothing. I have four lovers coming over today. There is no problem should they see each other, or even should they briefly overlap. I have set up what in sports would be called zone coverage. The writer in the morning thinks the writer at noon is coming for lunch and for me to laugh more at his jokes than he does at mine. The wrecker driver will see the second writer as, somehow, part of my job. The librarian who arrives slump-shouldered and CRT-eyed after a day of processing will see in the wrecker driver a man who wears his pants so low you can see the crack of his ass, a man in whom no one he, the librarian, is interested in could possibly be interested. I would not let the wrecker driver see the daredevil cyclist, however; of that you may be sure. I will have had four good, wounded, helpless men in one day. Together, they make a whole.

A set of lovers is complete until you have one whose irrepressible impulse is to tell you, in intimate detail, of all his past affairs. All men, of course, suffer from this curious proclivity to an extent, but my loquacious lover is so consumed by, is so beside himself with, imprudent revelation that a kind of charm finally obtains: bird, I suppose, to snake. "She told me that her lesbian experimenting," he tells me, "had to do, she thought, with bad weather with her men. That's the way she said it, *tempo male*—she lived in Italy. She said she was surprised by how *heavy* breasts are, and that's true, a certain size—and not, as you might think, the large ones but the, oh, about navel-orange ones—are *surprisingly* heavy, so I knew she was telling the truth. Then she told me about going catatonic after this hunk dumped her and painting all her appliances orange, and then drowning all the apartment-complex cats in the apartment-complex pool, and then painting the sidewalk outside her apartment orange, and then being put in a place, but she was not crazy, she insisted, then or now, and I don't know, it spooked me, I kept having visions of her coming after me with a butcher knife some night, so I, ah, ended it."

A loquacious lover will be, at a point like this, ready to kiss you. But not quite yet. "I was afraid of her. And you know that a scared lover is less useful to a woman"—he nods to me, reminding us I am a woman—"than one unfaithful or altogether impotent." Upon "impotent" he is fired up and ready to make his move. From the charged sphere of a distant apartment full of orange appliances and a madwoman, he's ready to show you what's up his sleeve. It is not up his sleeve, and it is generally of considerable ardor, if you let the talking lover talk. You are free to let him have his way with you, to feel in you the deep, early roots of the story he will tell some-

■

DOING THE WAVE, WITH FINESSE

From the MLLE *Copes advice column in the June 1993 issue of* Mademoiselle. *The column was written by* Mary Killen.

During the summer, I usually spend weekends with friends who live by the beach. I always have a good time, but I do not enjoy the leave-taking process because I hate the business of waving good-bye as I drive away from the house. Having already gone through the slightly tense-making ritual of kissing, congratulating, thanking, etc., I get into the car and start driving, but I am never sure at which point I should stop waving, or indeed at which point my hosts should stop waving. a long way from the house.

A. It is best to begin with a show of enthusiastic waving, then give the impression that there's some difficulty in the car—a coat stuck in a door or the contents of a bag spilling. The way to do this is to assume a perplexed expression and then drop your waving hand out of view as if fiddling with something. Keep this perplexed expression until tend to recover from the difficulty and wave heartily, giving one final gesture of enthusiasm.

NIXON'S LAST TRUMP

Twenty years ago this month, the late Richard Nixon resigned the office of the presidency and departed the White House insisting he was innocent of the crimes for which he otherwise would have been impeached. He devoted the rest of his life to the redrafting of the historical record and to the suppression of those documents that didn't agree with his version of events—in effect, cheating the American people of their national memory.

As Nixon wished, we have been left with political folktales, most notably ones about the erased 18 1/2-minute conversation between Nixon and H. R. Haldeman on June 20, 1972, that presumably answers the riddle of Watergate. By way of commemorating the anniversary of Nixon's resignation, *Harper's Magazine* asked one of its own editors to account for the presence of the infamous silence and invited four knowledgeable correspondents to imagine what was said.

I: END GAME

[redacted]

[redacted] Richard [redacted] the final twenty years [redacted] his remarkable public career, his [redacted] image. His last new Nixon was the masterpiece of his peculiar genius and his single greatest achievement. Laid to rest last April in a warm California drizzle, President Nixon departed the earth in the persona of the good, great man, beloved by his countrymen and gone safely to his patriotic reward. During the televised funeral the anchorpeople marveled at Nixon's metamorphosis, telling and retelling the tale of how the once-unindicted felon received a presidential pardon, avoided moving from San Clemente to San Quentin, and molted at the last into the timeless figure of elder statesman and global sage.

By now most of us are also familiar with Nixon's methods: the annual op-ed piece in the *New York Times*, the biennial book, and the time-[redacted] television program. If he had a pressing need to be heard, he might summon William Safire to his office; if frustrated, he had [redacted]. Lately it is known among the news media, anyway—how Nixon extorted a friendship from Bill Clinton. After failing to receive answers to his requests for an audience, Nixon intimated he might use his *New York Times* op-ed pulpit to condemn Clinton's foreign-policy shortcomings. Or not, depending. Clinton immediately struck up a correspondence, and on March 5, 1993, Nixon published his valentine in the *New York Times*. The concluding sentence reads, "By leading abroad as he has done so effectively at home, President Clinton will establish himself as the world's pre-eminent statesman."

Nixon's strategy for his last new Nixon deployed two lines of approach. His public offensive to build up the image of pensive cold warrior was carried out simultaneously with a private effort to suppress the evidence of the penultimate Nixon—the hunchbacked paranoid co-conspirator last seen waving from the doorway of a helicopter on [redacted] August 9, 1974.

In the following two decades, Nixon filed or intervened in one lawsuit after another, resisting the public release of the Watergate tapes. He invested an unknowable fortune, easily several million dollars in lawyers' hours alone, and it was money well spent: of the 4,000 hours in the National Archives, only 63 are available to the public; the rest lie trapped in a web of interlocking lawsuits that, taken as a whole, constitutes his final and enduring work.

Nixon's chicanery began not long after he stepped onto the Marine helicopter and jerked his hand over his head, waving good-bye as much to himself as to the nation. But because he was in a hurry, Nixon left behind—according to one of the first lawsuits—all the "papers, correspondence, documents, pamphlets, books, photographs, films, motion pictures, sound and video recordings, machine-readable media, maps, models, pictures, works of art, and other objects or materials" made or received by him or his staff at the White House. Every president claims his presidential papers, but Nixon claimed the output of the entire White House staff—42 million items, which break down as 40 million pages of paper, 500,000 photographs, 4,000 videotapes, 4,400 audiotapes, 950 White House tapes (the 4,000 hours), 1 million feet of motion-picture film, and more than 30,000 "gift items."

The very next month Nixon signed an extraordinary deal with the General Services Administration. He gave the agency temporary custody of the collection, but with one proviso—that he could retrieve the 4,000 hours of White House tapes and, ultimately, destroy them all. Not surprisingly, the administration that would shortly pardon his crimes against the state agreed to his terms. But that December, Congress passed the 1974 Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act. The legislation shifted control of the material to the National Archives and complicated the former president's access.

Just prior to the passage of the act, Nixon filed his first lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Washington to force the government to live up to its prior agreement. Then, the day after the bill passed, he filed a suit alleging that it was unconstitutional. He also argued that if the act *were* constitutional, then possession of his tapes amounted to a "taking" (such as when the government "takes" one's land for a highway and must pay "just compensation"). He sued to say he wanted a lot of money.

These early suits splintered off into a complex tangent of derivative suits. Finally, in 1977, the Supreme Court held that the materials act was, in fact, constitutional. The justices took quiet note of the fact that of the 42 million items, Nixon actually had seen no more than 200,000.

Meanwhile, the punch-clock clerks in the warrens of the National Archives had been at work, listening to the 4,000 hours of tape. The materials act ordered the staff "to provide the

public with the full truth ... at the earliest reasonable date, of the abuses of governmental power ..." and to return all personal and private materials to Nixon. Between these two [illegible] to which I stumbled last spring in search of the [illegible] 18½-minute gap in the Watergate tapes.

Recall that the gap occurred on June 20, 1972, three days after the break-in at the Watergate apartment complex. Until that day all that the nation had heard about was the break-in. But on June 20, the *Washington Post* reported that an address book belonging to one of the burglars listed E. Howard Hunt's phone number alongside the notation "W-House." The connection led the FBI, and subsequently the press, into the coils of presidential intrigue. The nation learned that Nixon knowingly maintained a dirty-tricks squad, telephone wiretappers, and an in-house cadre of troubleshooters known as the Plumbers, and that the President's men laundered large sums of money, some through accounts in Mexico, to pay for whores, for slush funds, for listening devices, for bribes.



Because the stories emerged as rumor or unsourced allegations, it seemed at first that they could be untrue. Then, on July 16, 1973, a presidential aide named Alexander Butterfield testified publicly that the White House and the Executive Office Building next door were wired with a system of hidden, voice-activated microphones. The most significant private conversations among Nixon and his top aides were all on tape, and the country soon learned a good deal more about the President and his associates than most people wanted to know. The attorney general, John Mitchell, was abruptly revealed to be a facile liar. Other men, lower in the hierarchy, huffed and puffed like cheesy B-movie actors.

Whatever hope remained of Nixon's own innocence began to dissolve in late 1973, when the 18½-minute gap turned up on a tape subpoenaed by special prosecutor Leon Jaworski. Not long afterward, on the "smoking gun" tape (from June 23, 1972), the President was clearly heard authorizing a plan to instruct the CIA to halt the FBI's investigation by falsely claiming that the break-in was a "national security" operation. Suddenly the President was a crook.

[illegible] and after it. I asked the man to repeat himself, because what he was saying was absurd. Yet it is true. One can travel all the way to the audio [illegible] phones, and listen to 1812 minutes of audio [illegible]

[illegible] with the mere volume of records Nixon claimed [illegible]

lease 150,000 pages of historically relevant papers. Nixon filed objections to 15,000 pages. Not a page of these papers has yet to be seen. But the historian Stanley Kutler, who along with the watchdog group Public Citizen is suing for public disclosure of the tapes, did obtain some of [illegible] *Wars of Watergate*. They included "a memorandum on the Save the Seals Campaign, a comment on the Davis Cup tennis team, and a copy of Mrs. Nixon's schedule ..."

Other Nixon maneuvers served as delaying [illegible]

H R

the process of releasing the tapes. But each release required public notification of the participating parties in each conversation, opportunity for Nixon's lawyers. To accommodate the process, a man named Carlos Narvaez to frequent the workstations of the archivists and review *their* played in open court during the prosecution The addition to the public knowledge involved 47 1/2 hours of tapes subpoenaed by Jaworski

Before the seventy objections. Sur- jections found a champion archivist for presidential li-

it became clear complaints to Fawcett, who directed the working archivists to disguise Nixon's demands for retractions as internal decisions. The archivists balked. One was banished (to Denver); others quit.

When I called the archives to speak to Fawcett, I reached Susan Cooper, a "public affairs specialist." She crisply answered two questions that I had previously submitted, but when I asked to speak to Fawcett she said, "I can tell you anything Fawcett can tell you." When I asked her if I could quote her, she said no.

The next day Fawcett called. While he spoke to me on the telephone, he had his boss posted at one ear and a lawyer at the other. His answers were mush, and when they weren't his lawyer told him to shut up. Fawcett would chuckle, "Jack, I'm being flagged down here. Sorry."

I have interviewed CIA agents who were more forthcoming. John Fawcett is a librarian.

Sources familiar with the archives offer two explanations of the means by which Nixon reduced a series of senior archivists into obedient sycophants. One theory speaks of the return to

GLOSSARY

COLSON, CHARLES A special counsel to President Nixon who once said, "When you got 'em by the balls, their hearts and minds will follow." He devised intelligence tricks, orchestrated fake letter campaigns to bolster the President's image, and helped compose the "enemies list" and set up the intelligence apparatus run out of the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP).

DEAN, JOHN Counsel to the President who diligently worked to the [illegible] president, [illegible] turned him into a government witness. Prior to the appearance of the tapes he was denounced by the White House as a liar.

DEAN, MAUREEN Wife of John Dean. A Watergate book published in 1991, *Silent Coup*, by Len Colodny and Robert Gettlin, alleged that she was connected with a call-girl ring and that the cover-up was actually her husband's effort to protect her reputation. The theory is believed only by the most tenacious revisionists and is now the subject of a libel suit filed by the Deans.

EHRLICHMAN, JOHN Nixon's domestic-policy adviser who supervised the Plumbers—the unit designed to plug media leaks.

HUNT, E. HOWARD A former CIA agent who, as one of the White House Plumbers, participated in the break-in at the Watergate [illegible] Hunt's White House phone number in the address book of one of the Watergate burglars that ignited the entire scandal. In a fax [illegible] description of me. The words 'agent,' 'operative,' and 'burglar' are inaccurate and inapplicable. Please do not use."

KLEINDIENST, RICHARD Attorney general after John Mitchell's resignation. He himself resigned in April 1973 after learning of the deep involvement of top White House aides in Watergate.

LIDDY, G. GORDON A lawyer who worked for CREEP and organized the Watergate break-in. For Nixon's 1972 re-election, he proposed a $1 million "espionage" program to abduct radical leaders to foil protests, conduct break-ins and wiretaps, and hire call girls to ruin Democratic opponents. Now a talk-radio host.

MAGRUDER, JEB Deputy director of CREEP who oversaw the break-in and wiretap operations and worked on the cover-up.

MCCORD, JAMES A Watergate burglar and former CIA agent.

MITCHELL, JOHN Attorney general who became head of CREEP in February 1972 in order to run the operations designed to undermine Nixon's opponents. He was later convicted of conspiracy and sent to prison.

O'BRIEN, LAWRENCE Chairman of the Democratic National Committee in 1972. Its offices in the Watergate building were the target of the break-in.

REBOZO, BEBE Wealthy Florida businessman and longtime friend of Nixon's.

power of many Nixon Administration officials in the 1980s, among them Alexander Haig, David Gergen (never really out of power), and Pat Buchanan. A second explanation, revealed in letters recently obtained by Public Citizen, suggests that over a period of many years Nixon carried on a cunning flirtation with the top archivists, dangling before them the possibility that he might grant them control of his presidential papers as well as the tapes. In the end, Nixon surrendered nothing and got exactly what he wanted: complicity on the part of the archives administrators in the effort to prevent the working archivists from releasing the tapes.

The interim appointment, in 1993, of Trudy Peterson as acting archivist resulted in the second, albeit feeble, attempt to release more Watergate tapes. Last year the archives announced the release of a mere three hours of relevant tape segments from May and June 1972; among them was the 18 1/2-minute silence from June 20. Nixon immediately sued to prevent any further releases.

On August 9, 1993, U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth ruled that all the processing of the 4,000 hours must be finished before one word can be released, a ruling that virtually guarantees years and years of delay.

Meanwhile, Nixon had pursued his longtime suit arguing that the archives' possession of the papers and tapes constituted a "taking" (therefore requiring a "just compensation"), and in 1992 a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit, issued an astonishing opinion in Nixon's favor and sent the case back to the lower court to determine the amount of money owed to him. The judges' opinion held that all presidents "owned" their papers and in one sentence breezily allowed, without explanation, that all 42 million items are "hereinafter" referred "to in shorthand as 'the presidential papers.'"

All presidents have left office with their papers, but most took them in the hope of making money, not managing history. In 1834, Washington's papers fetched $25,000 in taxpayer money when America bought them from his heir. Jefferson's heir got $20,000 in his deal; Madison's, $25,000; Monroe's, $20,000. After Franklin Roosevelt, every president has walked out with all his own paperwork in order to set up a library. Eisenhower was so efficient in this effort that when his successor, John F. Kennedy, entered the White House in 1961 he found almost nothing in the president's office but instructions for help "in the event of nuclear attack or other national crisis."

Each modern president has "donated" his papers to the National Archives in exchange for a perpetually funded presidential library. The practice is nothing short of bribery. Congress institutionalized the arrangement in the Presidential Records Act of 1978. President Reagan's library is built; President Bush's is now under construction, while the 36 million "official" documents of his service—which were packed onto four C-5 cargo planes his last day—sit in an abandoned bowling alley in Texas.

Which leaves Richard Nixon. His library at Yorba Linda, California, is the only one that operates without federal funding, but it is also the only one that has a mission—to get hold of the tapes. Nixon left a plan, a plan endorsed by the circuit court's definition of Nixon's "personal" and "privacy" interests in the tapes as a "taking." The conclusion does Nixon two favors. First, the Nixon estate will eventually receive sizable financial "compensation," which Nixon's will bequeaths to his library. More important, the circuit court converted Nixon's "privacy" interest into "property."

Typically, privacy claims diminish after death, but property is forever, and it can be handed down to children, grandchildren, or faithful executors. Nixon left this property to his daughters and named as co-executors two loyalists: a Bronxville, New York, lawyer named William E. Griffin and the director of the Nixon Library, John H. Taylor. Because the court determined that the tapes were property, Nixon's heirs are now able to continue Nixon's claim that the review of the tapes, which took the working archivists nearly a decade to complete, was inadequate and should be undertaken once again, just to be sure. Nixon also argued that the archives must transcribe all the tapes before it releases any of them. According to the archives' estimates, the tasks would consume 1.2 million man-hours and $40 million. And, of course, Judge Lamberth's ruling about all the tapes being released at once still stands.

Immediately after Nixon died, his lawyer, R. Stan Mortenson, asserted the everlasting strength of his client's dead hand. "The claims that have been advanced are in no way diminished by Mr. Nixon's death," he told the *Boston Globe*. Several weeks later he told the *Washington Post* that the determination to keep up this fight by Nixon's daughters, Julie Nixon Eisenhower and Patricia Nixon Cox, and by Griffin and Taylor "is quite stong, every bit as strong as the President's was."

At Nixon's funeral no commentator noted the irony that the presidential hopeful first undone by television in 1960 was redeemed by it in 1994. The last new Nixon, the understanding counselor to a thankful world, was laid to rest in prime time. The other Nixon, the president who resigned in disgrace, is buried among those 4,000 hours of unheard tape.

IMAGINARY

R

RN: This must never leave this office. No mat-
ter what. Even after we're both dead.

HRH: Okay. If you say so.

RN: I say so. I was in charge of the Bay of Pig
Jack Kennedy screwed it up. If I'd been presiden
it that little prick hadn't gotten [Mob boss] San
Giancana to steal the election for him, the whol
fucked-up mess never would have happened.

HRH: So you're saying . . .

RN: He brought it on himself. Don't blame me
It was the Cubans.

HRH: Castro?

RN: No, not Castro, you idiot. The othe
Cubans, Hunt's Cubans—the ones that got them-
selves caught in the Watergate. This fellow
Stooges . . . What's his name?

HRH: [Watergate burglar Frank] Sturgis?

RN: Sturgis, Sturgeon, whatever. It was hir
and Hunt. And the others. And Helms. The
were in it up to their ears.

HRH: The Bay of Pigs?

RN: No, not the Bay of Pigs, goddamn it. Wh
said anything about the Bay of Pigs?*

HRH: I thought you did.

RN: Dallas.

HRH: Dallas?

RN: Dallas, November 22, 1963. Do I have t
spell it out for you?

HRH: Oh, my God. You're not saying that . . .

RN: Right. They were all in it up to their ears—
Helms, Hunt, Sturgis, the Cubans, the Mob . . .

HRH: Jesus. You mean . . . What about Oswald

RN: A setup, a patsy. Helms and Hunt and tha
crowd, they're past masters at this kind of oper-
ation. They could blow the lid off the whol
thing. That's the problem.

HRH: Well, even if that's true, what does tha
have to do with us?

RN: Goddamn liberal press. They're out to ge
me, always have been. You open this up, star
pulling on that string, they're gonna say: Tricky
Dick, where was Nixon?

HRH: Where were you?

HRH: Jesus Christ. Okay, but why would the
Cubans want to whack Kennedy?

RN: THE BAY OF PIGS, you idiot! The mis-
sile crisis. The deal with Castro. The whole nine
yards. You don't bother us, we won't bother you.

*On page 59 of his book The Ends of Power, H. R. Haldeman wrote: "It seems that in all of those Nixon references to the Bay of Pigs he was actually referring to the

Those Cuban greaseballs hated Kennedy's guts.

HRH: And what about Hunt and Helms? Where do they fit into this?

RN: Fit in? They planned the whole thing from day one. Kennedy fucked up the Bay of Pigs, and he blamed it on the CIA. Said he was going to smash it into a thousand pieces. Fired [CIA head] Allen Dulles, the whole crew. He shut down the Cubans' training camps. Told the agency to stop trying to hit Fidel. They had a whole goddamn Murder Inc. going on down there. So guess who ends up getting hit?

HRH: Jesus. And what about the Mob, Giancana? I thought he was on Kennedy's side.

RN: Kennedy was humping his girlfriend. That was reason enough for Giancana. That and Bobby's war on organized crime. They figured if Jack was out of the way Bobby would be gone, too. They made it look like Castro was behind the whole thing. They figured we'd invade Cuba, they'd get their casinos back, everybody's happy.

HRH: But it didn't work out that way.

RN: Not quite. LBJ chickened out. Chickenshit. He was afraid of getting into a nuclear war. Anyway, what did he care? He was already in the White House.

HRH: What about Edgar Hoover? Didn't he know? Why didn't he warn Kennedy?

RN: Edgar? That faggot? He knew everything. He knew too goddamn much. He knew if you were wearing dirty underwear. Of course he knew. But tell Jack Kennedy he's gonna be hit? Don't make me laugh. That was the happiest day of Edgar's life.

HRH: And what about this Hunt? What was he doing in a two-bit operation like Watergate?

RN: There's more to this thing than meets the eye.

HRH: I don't think I want to hear it.

RN: They were breaking into Larry O'Brien's office. They tapped his phone. The guy knows too much. He worked for Howard Hughes, just like Maheu [former FBI agent with connections to the Mob and the Kennedy Administration].

HRH: Maheu?

RN: Maheu, Robert Maheu. Do I have to explain everything to you? Maheu was Hughes's right-hand man. He was up to his ears in the Bay of Pigs thing, Castro, the Cubans, the assassination plots—the whole ball of wax. They're all involved. That's why it was in everybody's interest to pin it all on this poor schmuck Oswald.

HRH: My God. How do you know all this?

RN: How do I know? I'm the President of the United States, you fucking idiot. I still have a few friends left. Bebe knows all these Cubans.

HRH: Bebe Rebozo? Jesus Christ. Is there anyone who isn't involved in this thing?

RN: I doubt it. That's why we need to shut it off, now.

[redacted]

Robert Maheu's. Jesus Christ, [illegible] hell of a thing to come back to. I go to Key Biscayne for a relaxing weekend with Bebe and—sonofabitch!—all hell breaks loose around here. Ehrlichman says Dick Kleindienst was playing a Sunday morning round at Burning Tree when some madman named Liffy—

H. R. HALDEMAN: Liddy, Gordon Liddy.

RN: So this asshole braces Dick with some cockamamie story about how Dick's gotta get five burglars outta the D.C. jail because they could talk and involve the White House in—

HRH: Yeah, incredible.

RN: And he told Liffy to fuckin' get lost, and finished his round. That it?

HRH: That's what I heard. Yeah.

RN: Ummm. Bob, who knows what the fuck's goin' on? Democratic headquarters . . . Watergate building . . . bottom line?

HRH: [Sighs] I told Dick giving Liddy the bum's rush probably wasn't the world's smartest decision. [Inaudible] phone call woulda freed the guys, and—

RN: —the context? Who the hell are these locked-up guys anyway?

HRH: Cubans mostly. But a fellow named McCord worked for Mitchell, sort of a male nurse for [Mitchell's wife] Martha.

RN: Yeah, the bottle baby. I'll get Bebe to handle the Babaloos if it comes to that. But what's our exposure? No bullshit, Bob, the facts.

HRH: Liddy's with the Committee to Re-Elect. Apparently hired McCord and the Cubans to rifle the Dems' files—O'Brien's office.

RN: Larry O'Brien? Shit!

HRH: Before this, Liddy was working next door for [White House Plumber] Dave Young, who works for [White House Plumber] Bud Krogh and Ehrlichman . . . that's part of our exposure . . . John Mitchell told me to dip into that old slush fund as necessary. Sir, I recalled Mitchell had your okay, so [inaudible] don't want to be a gravedigger, but the way Dean and Mitchell and Ehrlichman looked at one another I can tell they know more than they're sayin'.

RN: Then pry it outta them, goddamn it! Now I think back, Mitchell muttered something about a break-in a week or so ago, but I missed the full import . . .

HRH: You must have okayed it. So I'll put the screws on Dean. He's Mitchell's boy . . . find out where this leads back to. [illegible] Who—

RN: —that guy Hunt. Who's he?

HRH: Works for Colson, ex-CIA, pals around with Liddy.



A bee flew through the sunroof of the Dilgards' Saturn and they
ll drove into a telephone pole. Somehow, even the bee came out okay.

It was one of those hot summer days when melting doesn't seem
out of the question. Todd had been out playing golf all day and he
vas looking forward to dinner

The Dilgards were cruising
and the windows open, trying
Suddenly, a particularly large
buzzing around right unde



The perpetrator of the Dilgards' mishap goes by the oddly appropriate name Bombus americanorum.

Trying to shoo the bee
a little too much body Englis
nto a telephone pole. The im
mpression on the Saturn
people who then showed up—
company guys—because
eemed, well, pretty mu
chy from being thrown again
vith the way everyone in
he accident that
vas so much
part, except for me
Their new SL2 has

away; Todd used perhaps

and even the police

and the Dilgards

Kelly, although



A Different Kind *of* Company. A Different Kind *of* Car.

The Dilgards are pictured with a 1994 Saturn SL.* Anti-lock brake system available, on all 1994 Saturn
with airbags. If you'd like to know more about the safety features on our new

That's point one. Point two: gotta keep the press

RN: Absolutely. The goddamn *Post* . . .

Dean or God knows who else, we gotta squash it, right? Circle the goddamn wagons and stonewall like the Dems always do . . . it can't stand to rea-

with some scumbag creeps sitting in the D.C. jail.

HRH: Yeah, that'll be the line. Play it that way and

get on Dean right away.

HRH: I made a note. Uh, maybe I oughta alert [press secretary] Ron Ziegler.

RN: Yeah, yeah. Brief Ron—you do it, Bob, not me, I gotta stay clear of this. These lowlifes in jail got nothin' to do with the Casa Blanca, right? Inept burglars, amateurs, okay?

HRH: Just the right angle, Chief.

RN: Ummm. I've waded through shit before, but this time I'm not gonna get dirty. Christ! Brief Ron, number one, then find out what Colson, Ehrlichman, and Mitchell know. Tell them to keep their fuckin' mouths shut. Just keep a lid on things, Bob, clamp down hard. I'm depending

[illegible]

I I

bugging thing—

[CHEESING]: Yeah, now, what really happened Friday night? See, it would be nice if we could get out ahead of the curve, both on the

to speak . . . and on the PR counteroffensive as well. Both are important, Bob.

RN: What do we know about the group of five,

cooked for something that we aren't really behind. The av-

John Chancellor, though, he

RN: But Jim McCord, the burglar who was working security for the Committee to Re-Elect,

he's more than he's telling.

What do you mean?

HRH: There is some question if he's really retired. These CIA guys never really retire. They're always just working another mission for the agency. Who knows? The Nixon White House may have been the next target for these guys—Hunt and McCord. And these CIA types may have seized on some eager beavers working around here who think they're working for your re-election, and who think that the best way to your heart is through secret intelligence stuff.

That would be a real fucker, wouldn't it? You can't trust the CIA. What about this fellow McCord? What else do we want people to know, when all the dust blows over on this thing?

HRH: Well, our reports indicate that McCord taped open the locks to eight different doors at the Watergate. The taped doors were what tipped off the guard who caught them. But to do the job on O'Brien's office, only two doors needed to be taped: the sixth floor, where they broke in, and the garage, where they planned to get out. But this guy taped the eighth-floor doors open too. They couldn't even have used the eighth floor as an escape route!

RN: So?

HRH: So, why was that done? You know? Also, he and his men were busted nowhere near O'Brien's office. They were nabbed near a secretary's desk about as far away from O'Brien's office as you could get on the sixth floor! The bugs McCord had on him were for much greater frequencies than across-the-street stuff, meaning he was probably at work on something totally different from what Mitchell had him doing for the committee. And Alfred Baldwin, the lookout guy and wiretap monitor from the HoJo's across the street, is saying that he saw McCord in the DNC two full days before the Cubans even got into the place for the first time.

RN: If we didn't know any better, we'd think the whole damn thing was sabotage.

HRH: [FBI Director Patrick] Gray thinks the whole thing is CIA. Apparently the wiretaps caught some pretty spicy stuff. Maybe Liddy and the lookout guy were listening to taps McCord placed in some other building, not even the Watergate. This is where it gets interesting. See, Watergate is also where some whores, maybe working for the CIA—you know, those women they use—were seducing dignitaries, prominent Washingtonians. You know, [Supreme Court] Justice [William] Douglas's wife was caught up in this, with all sorts of kinky stuff going on. Remember that [*Washington*] *Star* article about two weeks ago [June 9, 1972], where they busted up a high-class D.C. call-girl ring? This ring might be the same one that McCord had our boys fool-

ing around with. And here's something interesting. The desk the burglars were standing at when they got busted belonged to a damn secretary! But hers was the phone used to run a call-girl ring out of DNC. Maybe this is the same bunch of girls busted in the *Star*. I'd sure like to know what was in that desk.

RN: CIA's been doing the call-girl number for years. What's Dean say?

HRH: Dean's the guy really making an effort to stay on every track with this prostitute angle. Surprisingly so, in some ways. I mean, he's all over Gray, and he swears Mitchell ordered this.

RN: What's Mitchell got to do with CIA?

HRH: Nothing, although he got briefings every day as attorney general. Mitchell is too smart to get involved with something like this.

RN: Mitchell was surprised by the damn thing!

HRH: Mitchell's probably several steps removed. 'Cause if he wasn't, he'd have stopped it. What I'm wondering is, did any of the lower people at the committee—shit, Dean or Magruder—give the order and now are just hanging Mitchell with you? Magruder says Mitchell gave the order in March. If that's true, why wasn't this done until now?

RN: Yeah, well, I'm not gonna call John Mitchell up and say, "Hell, John, did you do this?" He's got enough problems with goddamn Martha! [pause] If we could find some connection to the whores here, maybe through the D.C. mafia, then we tie that on someone and walk away from this thing.

HRH: See, Dean might know some of that stuff. Or his wife might. She's supposedly old friends with the madam of one of these call-girl rings. Hell, she just married Dean last October. Who knows how she climbed the social ladder before marrying Dean? And Mo Dean's girlfriend is a former companion of Joseph Nesline, who's genuine D.C. mafia. Thank God Dean's on our side, Mr. President!

RN: [laughter]

HRH: I do know Dean's mighty interested in this call girl outfit, 'cause the day the *Star* hit he summoned the prosecutor in the case to his White House office, eight days before the break-in at the DNC, asking to see the trick books. Maybe he thought he'd find some familiar names.

RN: Like Mo? [laughter]

HRH: Maybe the DNC break-in and the taps were just about this call-girl stuff and not about O'Brien's office at all. That scenario makes Mitchell ordering it even more unlikely.

RN: Did you talk to Mitchell directly?

HRH: No, but I trust Dean. Whatever his motives, he's on our side now. Basically, we've got some sordid agency stuff that may overlap with our own stuff, but the thing is, in this case we'll be left holding the bag.

RN: Mitchell'll take care of himself. Basically, the damn business is trying to cut our losses. Look at what the other side's done for twenty years—you know, Lyndon bugged my damn campaign plane in '68, and so forth. Let's also make damn sure we keep control of the evidence. We're vulnerable here, and it would be easy to fuck us. The Hunt connection, the other connections with the Committee to Re-Elect—I mean, we could look bad for almost anything. God forbid, any amateur could create great big gaps in our files, in the memos, in the tapes—I mean, it would look just terrible. Especially since . . . we didn't do the goddamn thing! There's no goddamn reason to bug the DNC. [laughter] There's plenty to hang us on, Bob, but this ain't it! [more laughter]

III: A CODA

To understand what the 18 1/2-minute silence really means, one must know that two men, both doppelgängers of the same dark persona, ran the presidency: Richard Nixon and his top aide, Bob Haldeman. History has accustomed us to think of "Haldeman and Ehrlichman." But John Ehrlichman was much like other senior staffers. He saw Nixon at scheduled meetings. Only Bob Haldeman saw the President every hour of every day. He was in and out, conferring, reporting, even arguing with the President. Then, on a typical evening, long after Haldeman had left the office for home, the two talked on the phone. No one had greater access to Nixon. No one knew better the Mephistophelian art of summoning his dark side. No one had greater control.

I remember an afternoon meeting with the President and Haldeman at which I mentioned Transportation Secretary John Volpe's request that the President attend a Transportation Department function. Nixon seemed favorably disposed when suddenly Haldeman leaned forward and slammed his fist down hard on the President's desk.

"Fuck Volpe!" he shouted. "Fuck the son of a bitch! He hasn't done a goddamn thing for us! Nothing! Fuck him!"

The President backed off immediately. "Uh, well, yeah,

principal reason for the erasure was to deny investigators evidence of the President's advance knowledge and approval of the Watergate break-in. I now believe that, true to his word, [illegible] did not know about the June 17 break-in, only about the initial penetration carried out by the same cast of characters (on the third try in two days) on May 28. He *had* to have known about that. It could well have been that Haldeman, in a rare departure from standard practice, felt that because the President had approved the installation of the electronic listening devices only three weeks earlier, it would not be necessary to inform him about sending Jeb Magruder's team back in to make repairs.

Nixon, understanding there'd be no general awareness of the May 28 event and that all publicity would be directed toward the June 17 break-in, would express his pleasure that Haldeman's "understandable oversight" had given him the opportunity to "truthfully" deny any knowledge.

And there were other incriminating matters discussed during the span of the erasure. Because bugging is a federal offense, the FBI assumed control of the investigation from the Washington, D.C., police. Haldeman would have reported this turn of events and explained that this was both good news and bad—good in that the FBI would be easy to control; bad in that the FBI would be quick to jump on the $2,400 found in the burglars' possession and trace the sequentially numbered $100 bills to a Mexican bank and then to the coffers of CREEP's finance committee.

Finally, Haldeman would have reviewed what he called "White House vulnerabilities"—the personnel links between the White House and CREEP, which would have to be denied or played down. In this context, he would have reminded the President of Howard Hunt's status as a consultant assigned to the White House office of Charles Colson, and of Gordon Liddy's position as counsel to the Campaign Finance Committee. The Hunt problem, Haldeman would explain, could be handled easily by cleaning out his office and backdating his "White House release" to March or April. But other problems included the connection of Haldeman's staff assistant Gordon Strachan to Jeb Magruder, the deputy director of CREEP, who in turn worked for CREEP director John Mitchell, who, finally, reported to Haldeman and the President.

This is what Richard Nixon and Bob Haldeman talked about on the morning of June 20, and in that meeting the cover-up was born. They were the true Watergate co-conspirators, and the silences that passed between them in the Oval Office and elsewhere spoke volumes. I can think of no more fitting monument to these two men [illegible] of the 18 1/2-minute gap. ■

JOURNEY THROUGH A DOOMED LAND

Exploring Chernobyl's still-deadly ruins

By Alan Weisman

On May 27 the government of Ukraine reversed its decision to close down Chernobyl's two remaining active nuclear reactors. Defying pressure from its anxious European neighbors, the newly formed republic resolved that its wrecked economy and urgent need for electricity compelled it to operate the plants indefinitely, despite the risk of further damage to its land, water, and people. Such was the level of international concern that immediately after the announcement was made, the Group of Seven industrialized nations placed the matter on the agenda for their summer meeting in Naples.



ALI HERMAN, IN THE REMOTE PRIPYAT AREA

In the eight years since the deadliest nuclear accident in history, thousands of new safety violations have been reported at Chernobyl. Radiation continues to leak into the surrounding countryside, and cancer rates in Ukraine, as well as in bordering Belarus and Russia, far exceed earlier predictions. The unexpected resurgence of other diseases suggests that human immune systems in the region have been badly weakened. Reports announcing the births of six-legged cows and human children without skulls have also appeared in the press, though their link to Chernobyl is harder to prove. For the most part, these news items have flickered briefly in the papers and disappeared without comment. But reading the news of Chernobyl's latest reprieve on a gray morning at my home in Gloucester, Massachusetts, I recalled a deceptively golden afternoon in northern Ukraine last summer as I leaned on a bridge over the Pripyat River, eight miles downstream from the Chernobyl nuclear power station. I was traveling through the former Soviet Union at the time, in the company of a group of American and local scientists intent upon making a map for survival in an irradiated landscape.

Below the bridge where I stood, a marsh hawk glided over the willows lining the Pripyat's sandy banks, which flattened into a broad floodplain covered with meadow grass, daisies, and purple lupine. I wandered over to check the list of birds that Kit Larsen, a systems analyst from the University of Oregon, was compiling. He had just added three species of raptors, a black tern, wagtails, stilts, and some mallards to the hooded crows, magpies, and a European goldfinch we'd observed earlier singing in a stand of maples. "It's the best birding I've done in the ex–Soviet Union," he said with a baffled shrug.

Alan Weisman is a contributing editor of the Los Angeles Times Magazine. *He is currently at work on books about the future of energy and the legacy of his Ukrainian ancestry.*

[illegible] By around us was ten times the [illegible] normal background radiation

[illegible] reactors capable of providing electricity to 7 million consumers. But shortly after midnight on that day, the plant's number 4 reactor exploded, venting at least one hundred times more radia- [illegible] that leveled Hiroshima. Five years later, the [illegible] Chernobyl's number 2 reactor, devouring its turbine room but failing to reach its core. In the years since design flaws and mismanagement shattered the Soviet fantasy of nuclear safety, it had become apparent that the repercussions of Chernobyl would be worse—and extend farther over space and time—than anyone had imagined. Nevertheless, we could see blinking lights indicating that number 1 and number 3 were still on-line, pumping power to Kiev and Odessa and across borders to Western Europe, via transmission lines permanently soaked [illegible]

To reach the banks of the Pripyat, our government van cleared the first security checkpoint about twenty miles from Chernobyl. Beyond the barricade, the orderly collective fields of wheat, flax, and potatoes north of Kiev gave way abruptly to an expanse of unkempt scrubland. Seven miles south of [illegible] ter our impromptu birding expedition, we reached another [illegible] were ushered into a concrete building and instructed to leave our [illegible] lockers. Wearing paper slippers and un- [illegible] We [illegible] along corridor to a guarded [illegible] the other side, an identical [illegible] attained long-sleeve cotton shirts, coveralls, heavy leather sh[illegible] breathing filters, and surgical caps to protec[illegible] hair from specks of airborne plutonium. We [illegible] boarded a bus so contaminated that it wa[illegible] never be allowed to leave this restricted [illegible] rode toward the huge steel-and-conc[illegible] container known as the sarcophagus, which [illegible] cases the hot remains of reactor number 4. [illegible] companying us was Ukrainian nuclear phys[illegible] Vladimir Tikhii, who had helped track C[illegible] nobyl's spreading radioactive stain in the im[illegible] diate aftermath of the disaster, as well as tw[illegible] Larsen's University of Oregon colleagues: e[illegible] ogist John Baldwin and landscape architect D[illegible] Hulse.

At the destroyed reactor, our instruments [illegible] istered several hundred times the normal ba[illegible] ground radiation. The gray walls of [illegible] sarcophagus, more than ten stories high and fi[illegible] nine feet thick in places, had been patched so [illegible] ten they resembled the tarred, caulked hull [illegible] derelict ship. Coils of concertina wire, cycl[illegible] fencing, and floodlights surrounded the str[illegible] ture, and the grit at our feet still contained t[illegible] particles of uranium fuel and plutonium [illegible] charged during the accident.

Of the 100,000 men who built the vaul[illegible] 1986, several thousand died from radiation p[illegible] soning. Despite their labors, more than 11,[illegible] square feet of leaks have formed, and a Fren[illegible] construction firm that was recently contracte[illegible] erect another tomb around the first one warn[illegible] it could never be completely sealed. Nor could [illegible] dioactive runoff from Chernobyl's cooling pon[illegible] impounded by dikes hastily constructed at en[illegible] mous cost along the Pripyat, be kept from see[illegible] ing into the watershed. Once there, the run[illegible] flows directly to the Dnieper River, Ukrain[illegible] Mississippi, the source of drinking and irrigati[illegible] water for 38 million people.

Even more hopeless is the task of recoveri[illegible] the massive amounts of deadly radionuclic[illegible] dumped by wind and rain clouds over 50,0[illegible] square miles of prime farmland across Ukrair[illegible] Belarus, and Russia—much more farmland th[illegible] these precarious new nations can afford to aba[illegible] don. The fallout consisted mainly of radioacti[illegible] cesium 137 and strontium 90, by-products [illegible] uranium fission with thirty-year half-lives th[illegible] will significantly irradiate the region's soil a[illegible] food chain until at least the year 2135. This [illegible] why Larsen, Hulse, and Baldwin had come. Wi[illegible] colleagues from Moscow State University, th[illegible] had devised a computer program to help rur[illegible] Russians near the Ukrainian border confront th[illegible] inescapable prospect of a radioactive future b[illegible] giving them access to information that goverr[illegible] ments have routinely kept secret. Now, with D[illegible] mydenko and Tikhii, they were in Ukraine to t[illegible] to do the same. Yet amid acres of radioactiv[illegible]





achinery, which stood rusting beneath a peel-
g sign that exalted the V. I. Lenin Chernobyl
uclear Power Station as a "Victory for Com-
unism," the notion that any technology could
lve human problems was hard to sustain.

In the glum silence, I became aware of the
witter of nesting barn swallows over the stac-
ato accompaniment of the Geiger counters.
arsen and I watched the birds flit among ra-
ioactive construction cranes sacrificed to the
use of the sarcophagus. Chernobyl's birds,
ladimir Tikhii explained, were absent when
e was taking lethal water samples from the
ripyat River in 1986, but the first of them re-
rned a year after the disaster. With few humans
r predators to bother them, they now seemed
be flourishing. For that matter, a large popu-
tion of radioactive roe deer was thriving in
e surrounding forests. The towns of Cher-
obyl and Pripyat, from which 50,000 stricken
orkers and their families had been evacuated
n the afternoon of April 27, 1986, were also be-
g reclaimed by nature. Once-trimmed hedges
ad run wild, their foliage so dense that many
ouses were nearly covered; when we drove
rough Chernobyl's silent streets, branches of
npruned chestnut trees grazed the sides of our
bus. "Plants," Tikhii mused, "are sometimes stim-
ulated by radiation."

"The plants and animals here may *appear* healthy," Demydenko interrupted, "but who knows what their life expectancy will be or what chromosomal deviations will erupt in future generations?" Demydenko, a tall, bearded physicist, was one of many former Soviet scientists transformed into the unfamiliar role of bureaucrat. "Birds can't understand the risk they take here. Since radiation can't be smelled or felt, sometimes even we can't imagine it damaging us."

Despite the fact that the presence of radiation in the landscape will give rise to thousands of latent cancers, ravaged immune systems, and inherited genetic damage over the coming decades, both Ukraine and Russia intend to build more nuclear reactors. The strategy has only deepened the sense of foreboding that already pervades the two societies. Standing in front of Chernobyl's boarded-up Ukrainian church, I asked Demydenko whether the project designed by the Oregon scientists would make a real difference in people's lives. "We have a totalitarian legacy of citizens not making decisions ... since long before the 1917 socialist revolution, some-

underestimated government figures. As th

T



Because the main contaminant, cesium 13
is a chemical analogue to calcium, it was co
centrating in cows' milk, the source of 80 percen
of a rural Soviet child's protein. Although hu

eds of families were evacuated from the most dioactive villages, it had been impossible to locate several million. Those who remained ehind had to know what they could safely eat, here likely hot spots of radioactive accumula on were located, which crops were best to grow, nd how soil could be treated to minimize the ansfer of radiation to humans. Could Hulse's ndscape-mapping technology, Gennady agodin wanted to know, be adapted to teach eople living downwind from the Chernobyl re tor?

"We'd need maps," Hulse had replied. He eant detailed topographic maps, routinely pur ased at home from the U.S. Geological Survey, it classified as military secrets in the Soviet nion. The prospect of the Defense Ministry leasing them to Americans seemed far-fetched. ut one of the phones on Yagodin's desk linked m directly to Mikhail Gorbachev's office. ou'll get them," he nodded.

The Soviet Union, Yagodin informed Baldwin d Hulse, would pledge 500,000 rubles to fund roject to create a multilayered computer ren ring of the landscape around Chernobyl. No ne ! new, of course, that the Soviet Union would on vanish or that the ruble, now the currency a new country, Russia, would be devalued sev al hundredfold. The value of Yagodin's grant ummeted from $750,000 to $16,000 and kept opping. Everything changed, except for the tractable matter of Chernobyl, which was now cated in independent Ukraine. Regardless of who claimed the land, it remained radioactive.

In June 1993, in Dmitri Kavtaradze's laboratory Moscow State University, Baldwin, Hulse, rsen, and a complement of Russian experts ap ed final flourishes to the Chernobyl Project's IS, which had been revived by private grants om the United States. On my way to join them, stopped by a sagging building on Petrovsky reet that houses the Moscow chapter of Cher byl Union, a survivors' organization. Inside an fice so cramped that I had to sidle between the sks and bookshelves, I shook hands with two rmer nuclear-construction engineers, Evgeny kimov and Serafim Bulgakov, who had helped pervise work on the Chernobyl sarcophagus. ney were known as "liquidators"—the designa on given the 600,000 Russians and Ukrainians no had served on the disaster cleanup. Ac rding to a dog-eared Soviet government hand ok they showed me, liquidators were entitled free passage on subways and buses, 50 percent nt reduction, early retirement, and pay bonuses. idows, orphans, and evacuees received ad tional catastrophe benefits. But the strapped w governments of Russia and Ukraine had been unable to fulfill all these obligations. To compensate, the men had taken to selling scratch and win Super Jackpot lottery tickets for an international drawing. The proceeds, the ticket read, went to the Children of Chernobyl Fund.

The two engineers spoke hopefully, but they were clearly embarrassed at having to huckster for cash. Akimov opened his scrapbook of the glory days: 100,000 men, building something that had never before been built. For their courageous toil they had been fed banquets of special foods like caviar and smoked fish. Bulgakov spotted a photograph of his volunteer brigade, posed under a banner reading, TIME GIVES BIRTH TO HEROES. THE PEACE CHERNOBYL! He located himself among the faces of his comrades, most of whom were now dead. Just six years later, this gray man with watery blue eyes who became exhausted after walking ten minutes could well have been the father of the proud worker in the picture.

> GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS KNEW ALL ALONG THAT PEOPLE WERE PLOWING RADIOACTIVE DUST, EATING RADIOACTIVE VEGETABLES, AND FEEDING RADIOACTIVE HAY TO THEIR COWS

"In thirty years working at nuclear stations," Akimov said, "I saw many micro-Chernobyls. Accidents occur when people's minds are elsewhere. Today, everything costs ten times what it used to. If I tried working in a nuclear plant while worrying about the price of sausage to feed my children," he added, "how could I keep my mind on the job?"

When I arrived at his Moscow State laboratory later that afternoon, Dmitri Kavtaradze was showing John Baldwin a graph demonstrating that as the apparent risk of a military confrontation subsides, people's perception of ecological risk increases. Kavtaradze, pink-skinned with a brushy mustache, spoke fluent English that favored adjectives and metaphors. "The collapse of the U.S.S.R.," he told me, "left us like the man whose wife honestly admits her adultery—wiser but less happy."

Next door, Kit Larsen was talking with two young Russian associates, geographer Alexei Naumov and biologist Elena Boukvareva, who sat at tandem computer screens, debugging the project software. Its centerpiece was macGIS, a program Hulse and Larsen co-authored, which crammed the power and graphics of a mainframe GIS into a portable Apple Macintosh. Naumov had translated macGIS into Russian and now was squeezing the character-rich Cyrillic alphabet into Macintosh menu screens that could be toggled between both languages. Boukvareva was test-driving the program's multimedia introduction: a computerized show with sound and

told that Limnik suffers bouts of irrational behavior, the result of prolonged radiation exposure stemming from surveys he had conducted at Cher[illegible] right after the explosion. Limnik was a genuine hero, his colleagues told me, but they feared he might have leukemia, a matter he refused to discuss. As we waited for him, I met the remaining team members, nuclear physicists Olga Sotnikova and Mikhail Panin. Until recently, their work had involved mostly military secrets; the [illegible]tronly Scotnikova had spent part of her career in the Urals at Chelyabinsk, a military plutonium-production reactor 700 miles east of Moscow where an enormous explosion in 1957 had caused thousands of deaths. For the Chernobyl assignment the two physicists had written a program called the Dose Forecast Model, which when grafted onto macGIS calculated the radiation a human would absorb from various combinations of foods, soil types, and crop-rotation schemes. The Dose Forecast Model was the key to the entire project, the tool that presumably would allow each of the 70,000 residents of Novozybkov to focus all the data on his or her own circumstances.

Humans absorb radiation three ways: directly, through exposure to a radioactive source; by inhaling radioactive particles; and by ingesting food contaminated by fallout. Ever since the initial explosion subsided, 95 percent of Chernobyl's ongoing threat has come from the third. The Dose Forecast Model took into account the fact that plants tend to deposit radioactivity in their leaves. Leafy vegetables such as lettuce have levels many times higher than grains, which store more radioactivity in non-edible parts like their stalks. But people need leafy vegetables, and importing enough to contaminated regions would cost more than people or governments can pay these days. One way to reduce lettuce's uptake of cesium 137, Panin said, is to rotate crops: plant a field in wheat, barley, or a cover crop like lupine to suck radiation from the surface, then follow with greens.

This strategy, of course, raises another problem: how to dispose of the radioactive wheat chaff and barley stalks. Burning them would return radioactivity to the environment, so land must be set aside for organic toxic-waste dumps. A long-term solution, especially for highly contaminated areas, is planting orchards. Apple and pear trees store more radiation in their trunks than in their fruit; conceivably, in two centuries, when the cesium has decayed, the trees could be harvested for wood, and the land would again be safe for vegetables.

"NOT A PLACE FOR [illegible] CLICKED BUT NEARBY [illegible] A FLOWERED SKIRT AND A [illegible]

[illegible] click, and a map of Europe appeared, [illegible] Chernobyl—one dark lobe engulfing western [illegible]. Another click showed [illegible] migrated through the soil and streams, up the food [illegible] and a second stain seeped through a woman [illegible]. Another click descended into microdetail, as single cells and DNA chromosomes were barraged by radioactive ions. Yet another click opened an optional level for science students, replete with equations and chemical formulas.

The introduction ended with a display of the greatly increased risk of radiation combined with such other hazards as smoking (an almost universal obsession among Russian men). An aerial view of the tainted Novozybkov landscape now appeared on the screen, digitally scanned from the topographic maps Gennady Yagodin had somehow coaxed from the Soviet Defense Ministry. With the push of a button, the map could be rotated horizontally to reveal the terrain's texture, or it could be superimposed with as many as twenty-three colored layers of data. As Boukvareva clicked away, outlines of the district's six collective farms [illegible] they subdivided [illegible] was isolated. Further layers added forests, soil, roads and bridges, settlements, slope, elevation, water bodies, peat deposits, crop-rotation sequences, and crops themselves. The all-important final layer displayed radiation levels.

[illegible] afternoon, Vitaly Limnik, the man who had measured, field by field, the Novozybkov radioactivity data used in this project, was due to [illegible] at the lab. He was late, and there was no [illegible] that he'd appear at all. In whispers, I was

The evening before we caught a train for Bryansk, the most contaminated region in western Russia, we were relaxing in a dormitory room at International University when we were joined by Dima Litvinov. The son of an exiled dissident

them tactical. Litvinov directed campaigns for eenpeace-Russia. He believed that another nuar catastrophe was all but inevitable because ssia's infrastructure was deteriorating and the rkforce was demoralized. Besides the fifteen reming Chernobyl-type graphite-controlled reors, the former Soviet bloc has forty-one ssurized-water nuclear stations. From his briefe Litvinov extracted diagrams of pressure cracks reactor vessels. In western rope, he said, cracked pres rized-water reactors had en shut down, but in the mer U.S.S.R. they were ll commonplace. He shufd through more papers: a eerless World Bank memo out Russia's nuclear-safeconditions, reports of an eged cover-up regarding a ent spill at the Tomsk-7 utonium factory, an adssion by Russia's environental minister that spent ctors and fuel from nuear submarines were still ing dumped at sea.

Baldwin asked about elyabinsk, site of the 57 explosion, where his m had been asked to take GIS project next. Litviv described a second acdent in that region, a rtial meltdown in the mid-1970s at the Belorsk military breeder reactor, whose unprocessed el still sits in a cooling pond, leaking into the vironment. Ten minutes at the water's edge uld kill a man. "Lovely," said Hulse. "When can go?"

"You want worse?" Lately, Litvinov had been instigating black-market sales in Moscow of uraum and plutonium, not in quantities sufficient produce an explosion but by the gram. "There enough neutron emitters in one gram for a y dirty radiological bomb," he said. "Imagine terists dropping one into London's water supply."

"How do you sleep at night?" Larsen asked.

"Could you pass me that?" Litvinov replied, reaching for a bottle of Stolichnaya.

Two days later, Vitaly Linnik and I stood in Novozybkov potato field overlooking a peat g. Dairy cows lolled along the winding brook at marked the field's border with Belarus, where percent of Chernobyl's radiation fell. One al of the joint Russian-American project was provide a guide for making informed choices ickly in future disasters by using GIS's power to mesh data with topography. Soon after the Chernobyl explosion, the Soviet government made one of their more fateful decisions—one that helped explain why this region was so heavily doused: rain clouds heading east were secretly seeded by pilots from the Soviet Committee of Hydrometeorology so that contaminated rainfall would not reach Moscow. As a result, the green, undulating landscape, planted in rye, feed



corn, root crops, and apple trees, was filled with invisible poison. Linnik's Geiger counter indicated that we were receiving between 200 to 300 micro-roentgens per hour here, ten to fifteen times more radiation than is normal. "Not a place for young children," Linnik said. But we could hear some. At a nearby white brick house, we saw a barefoot girl in a flowered skirt and a blonde woman in sweatpants holding a little boy. As we approached, the father joined them, shirtless and sweating from digging potatoes.

Anatoly and Irina Bynya, it turned out, had moved here just two years ago. We asked if they understood that this part of Novozybkov was considered so toxic that it had been evacuated. They did. I glanced at the children.

"We didn't have much choice," Anatoly sighed. The house had belonged to his own father, who during the 1950s was sent to Kazakhstan as part of a five-year plan to open new agricultural land. Anatoly was born and raised there. But with the breakup of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan became an independent Islamic nation, and ethnic Russians were no longer welcome. So the couple returned to Novozybkov.

"But it's radioactive here," I repeated.



pling soil at depths of two and five centim
in the center and every corner of every fie
Novozybkov. These fine collective farms, h
alized, were now the most contaminated pi
in the republic. When he was asked to sugg
plot sites for the joint Russian-American C
nobyl project, Linnik knew exactly where.

We drove to Svyatsk, an abandoned villag
western Novozybkov. A sign that proudly ch
ed each year's potato harvest had stopped abr
ly in 1989, when everyone fled. Near a
window that displayed canned goods bean
four years' accumulation of radioactive dust

encountered an old wo
an in a white babusk
who told us she was h
only one left in the vil
lage. She had refused t
leave. We poked in
cottages, built centu
ago from stout, hewn
bers, whose painted d
and shutters now flap
uselessly. Their inter
attested to rapid evac
tion: a plank floor str
with crayoned pages f
a child's geography le
a skeletal Christmas t
tipped on its side; a b
of apples, left to shri
The Geiger counter cl
tered in stove ashes, w
radioactive kindling
been burned, and aro
dramspouts where r
water laden with ces
137 had poured off
eaves. In a former tr
garden, feral, irradiated house cats lurked am
rhubarb plants. Just outside town we saw t
men in a pasture, sharing a bottle. One of th
fell. Alcoholism is a major secondary effec
Chernobyl, partly because people here beli
that vodka insulates them from radiation. "
rather die early here than grow old in the h
ing project where they put us," shouted the
who was still standing.

I couldn't blame him. The land was so fert
and the danger so insidious. We entered a wo
land of fragrant red pines and white birch, borde
by clumps of blueberry and raspberry. Beca
forests act as windbreaks, catching and hold
moisture, they are particularly tainted—a s
rowful irony in the Russian countryside, wh
picking forest mushrooms and berries is a favo
pastime and a principal source of vitamins. Ga
ering them from this sweet-smelling glade, or a
where in Novozybkov, was now strictly forbidd

Linnik set the Geiger counter on a piece

ss. It clicked wildly. "I wonder if it will hit 0," he mused. It went to 500. He whistled. It pt going, and he quietly stared at it. I heard a odpecker. The Geiger counter finally held at 7 micro-roentgens per hour. It was the highest reading Linnik had ever seen here.

"We should go," he said.

Figuring that it was better for many people to eive a little radiation than to expose residents m contaminated zones to even higher conntrations through their diet, the U.S.S.R. deled after Chernobyl to distribute foods from its lioactive farm belt to markets throughout the untry. Plans were made to disburse thousands kilos of irradiated beef in sausage made up of e part infected meat per nine parts clean. Then e Soviet Union broke apart; today, contamited crops remain in the country where they're own. Given the forbidding cost of imports, ople have no alternative but to eat them.

With the nuclear genie out of the bottle for cenies to come, the residue of the explosion at ernobyl poses two as yet unanswerable quesns. First, there is the matter of how Ukraine will for the ongoing cleanup and compensation to tims, which are currently devouring about 13 rcent of the country's annual budget. As in ssia, the recent flurry of World Bank and Inational Monetary Fund advisers in Kiev inates the desperate hope that in the long run, arket economy will prevail and prosper. Meanile, I saw fishermen in their shallow skiffs back the Dnieper, catching and eating radioactive e and carp, and selling them in the streets. gally, this was prohibited, but in practice no one ed to stop them. People were hungry.

Second, how harmful will chronic radiation ve to be? There are many indications that ady low-level doses of increased radiation have umulative effect on cells and chromosomes. ly time—and generations—will reveal what nage Chernobyl really caused. Officials at the rainian Ministry of Health's Radiation Hyne Laboratory told me that the numbers of expected thyroid cancers and chronic diseases re already multiplying in contaminated areas. e study indicated that toxic heavy metals oughout Ukraine—a legacy of Soviet military nufacturing—were intensifying the radiation's tructiveness.

"Life itself will be the evidence," said Dr. exander Urinan, a surgeon I visited at Kiev's ildren's Hospital Number 14. "Seven years er the accident, we're now starting to observe effects we feared." Urinan confirmed that roid cancers in Ukraine and Belarus, especially among children who received a dose of ioactive iodine from the initial blast, have surpassed the numbers predicted. It is also clear that the immune systems of many children of Chernobyl, even those born far from the reactor, have become so depressed that old diseases like diphtheria are now reappearing. "We're seeing newborn children with liver and stomach cancers," Urinan said. The hospital has also reported record numbers of babies born with cleft palates, deformed limbs, and missing rectums. "We can't tell what to expect when affected children who are now adolescents begin to give birth," he added.

With hematologist Svetlana Kireeva, I walked through the hospital's white-tiled cancer ward. A quarter of the 100 children here were dying from lymphoblastic leukosis, a form of leukemia that usually occurs at much lower rates. "Something similar happened in the years after Hiroshima," she noted.

I paused at the bed of a boy named Taras. Like the others, he was bald, puffy, and hooked to an IV. His lips were painted with aqua balm to soothe the ulcerations from the leukemia. On the wall were decals of mushrooms, fruit, and Scrooge McDuck. Taras lay propped on his mattress, playing a board game with his mother. She moved the pieces for him. She was a geography teacher who had lived in a rural region east of Chernobyl. She was pregnant with him when the reactor blew.

No one told them that the village had been hit by fallout. "But we all knew." I asked if they talk about Chernobyl in geography classes. "It's too painful," she said. She and her neighbors had sent their healthy children away to live with relatives. "It's the only hope we have for them. This is all poisoned."

"What can be done?" I asked.

She looked at her son, who had been lying in the hospital for a year.

"Nothing," she said.

A week earlier in western Russia, I had watched the Oregon and Moscow State scientists demonstrate their risk-reduction program to the somber citizens of Bryansk and Novozybkov. In the discussion period that followed, several confessed their doubts that they could ever give up eating their beloved berries. I asked myself if these people—or their governments—would be able to summon the will to accept the profound changes demanded by their radioactive environment.

"It will be up to the young," Baldwin had said in Bryansk. "The old men in power today are still in denial about the poison that surrounds them. But the coming generation has been raised on computers, environmental awareness, and the wrenching metamorphosis from communism to capitalism. I hope they will understand what needs to be done. And when that generation is making Russia's and Ukraine's decisions," he added, "the radiation will still be around." ■

THE CUT OF HIS JIB

By Anthony Giardina

W



ter we moved in. Peluria, the contrac-

it he was asking too much. We, the

on the slope of a hill. Peluria had left a thick stand of trees in the back, and amid them he had planted a fountain, an angelic woman

task of living in it. The Sunday Matt

Romano came, the air h
heightened quality, th
the way I remember
though I know some p
of my memory are the re
of additions, things gath
to the central, bare fact
cause they seem, now,
propriate. We had mo
into our house in mid-
and this was the beginn
of spring. Lawns had o
just been seeded, so the
I remember it—all the
ilies gathered on gre
lawns, standing like aler
shepherds to view the co
ing of the Romanos—c
not be exact. More likel
was most standing at the m
driveway, while a fam
stepped out of a gold ca
Mercury Cougar, I thi
First, a man who looked l
he'd just emerged from the cover o
novel, in a blue double-breasted bl
er and cream-colored slacks. Ther
wife, with honey-blonde hair and s
glasses, followed by two daughters, da
haired, like him. They carried abo
them an air of difference; someth
made you look at them as if, were y
only to stare hard enough, you'd fi
something out. And Dolores was w
them that day. I remember that mu
with absolute assurance. She emerg
from the car last, a smaller, darker wo
an, much younger than his wife b
too old to be his daughter. She wo
sunglasses as well, but she remov
hers. She took them off and glanc

oss the seeded lawn at us, for only a
ond's lapse. My father must have
e out and joined me by then, be-
cause I remember it was the
two of us staring at her.

He was, from the beginning, a
d of odd duck. I never heard those
rds used, but I imagine hearing
m used in an overheard conversa-
, my father and mother talking, my
ner and one of the men. This is
at should have happened. They
ht to have stood back and under-
od him, dismissed him with one of
functional phrases they had in-
ted for such men. Instead, they
what was natural for them: they ac-
ted him. He became, almost im-
diately, a part of the crowd. They
alized on Saturday nights, nearly
ry week, in one or another of the
ghbors' carpeted basements. My
ner's idea of a good time was to
ner all the men into his office as
n as they arrived and ask them to
e off their clothes and get into
men's dresses and wigs. Then the
n, dressed as women, would come
and dance for their wives, the
ls," who would sit together on
ches and giggle uproariously. From
rooms upstairs, my sisters and I
uld hear them and sometimes creep
he banister and watch these hairy,
-exposed men in scanty costumes,
n the bottoms of which their box-
horts showed. In dresses and wigs,
y looked more like men than they
uld have in their regular party
hes. That was the nature of the
e; I understood, early on, that it
all about sexual display.

My father loved to tell the story of
first time Matt Romano came to
of these parties. He grabbed him
he arm, took him into his office,
said, "Take off your pants." "You
uld have seen his face!" my father
ghed. He is a simple man, my fa-
; when he laughs his face goes red.
believes deeply, I think, that every
n is at heart the same man, with the
e desires, save for those few who
so perverse that they must be set
e from the rest. "And then," my fa-
went on, "in the next minute, he
it!" It was Matt Romano's initia-
as ordinary man. He removed his
e double-breasted blazer and the
cream-colored slacks and put on a dress and a wig. I did not watch this particular party, but I saw other scenes enough like it so that I can imagine how Matt Romano would have arranged his face into a pose of easy mirth, so much like the others that anyone would have been fooled. Then he would have gone out and bared his legs, and the men would have laughed, very hard, and put their hands on his shoulders, and laughed again.

Very soon, his name began to change. I had thought, on first hearing it, that it had a certain elegance that put him at a distance from the others. And they spoke it, too, that way at first, with a kind of perplexed respect. Who was this man, this newcomer, this lawyer who had moved in among them? His practice was in Boston. Much was made of that, his city life, his professional life, his physical removal from the cement trucks and Laundromats and muddy construction sites of my father and his cronies. It is easy enough to imagine him as he might have existed in those days, in his office with its view of the harbor. In my image, he is speaking on the phone, leaning forward, scratching the side of his nose, a familiar habit of his. Several stories below, the water runs slate-gray, smoky in the afternoon light. Yet I can't hold the image without seeing him turn away from the things on his desk, looking down into the harbor as if riveted by something. There, my father and Steve Delosa are out on my father's Chris-Craft, fishing for flounder off of Rainsford Island. They are wearing fishing jackets, funny hats; in their hands are cans of beer. He is staring at them intently; there is something he is trying to figure out, a desire he is probing. Already, they have put a spin on his name, something that does not displease him. In their flat Boston pitch they stress the *an* in Roman*o*. All its languor, its otherworldliness, are being ironed out. They are making him, in all the ways they know how to, just like them.

There is only the fact of Sundays to stand in the way of this ongoing absorption: on Sundays she comes, the slender, dark-haired girl in sunglasses. She wears dresses that cling to her small body, and she moves with the cautious pr[illegible] pled in youth [illegible] everyone knows her name. "[illegible] visit the Romanos today?" my mother might ask my father on a Sunday evening, as if she hadn't herself looked and seen. And the name will not be reduced, not the way they have reduced his name "Dolores" always come out, in spite of their best attempts, sounding ambiguous, dreamlike, a word from another place, one they have steadfastly determined not to visit.

Dolores was Matt Romano's secretary. That explanation arrived a month or so after the Romanos moved in. I don't know when the neighbors had begun to wonder about their Sunday arrangements, but I know the explanation, the business relationship, was spoken of with relief. After that, a certain story sprang up to explain her presence. She was an orphaned girl for whom the Romanos had agreed to stand as substitute family.

A snapshot: it is early summer, before Matt Romano has asked me to start mowing his lawn. I am in my backyard. I do not know what I am doing. Perhaps when you are fifteen, you only watch; it is your principal task, whatever other functions your body might be performing. It is your obsession to figure out the world. Matt Romano and Dolores are alone in the backyard, and from two houses away I can see them. They are walking among the trees in the Romanos' backyard, the miniature forest of tall maples. Her dress is blue and belted; she is wearing a straw hat. He is walking slightly ahead of her and gesturing. His long arm goes out, as if to make a point; he turns to her. For a moment he considers her in the way I was later to see him consider many things, as if from a far remove, something passing briefly over his face that to an outsider might resemble contempt. Then something else. The afternoon, for two or three seconds only, is heavy with an essence that I know, even at fifteen, he believes to be at the heart of life. If I had now to put a name on that thing I was made aware of, I would fumble, I would choose a useless word like "confusion." Like "ambivalence." But at that instant, as I stand in the presence of it, I seem to understand that there is no need to name it. It is simply there, so

I

I don't remember answering. It was

re priest. But some arrangement must

Wednesdays. He had offered eleven

that was impressive

halt-a-day. He was at work while I did

[illegible] one back after I saw his car in [illegible] driveway, and that was the ritual I

[illegible] their dinner, which was later than ours,

yards I had to leave the very comfortable scene of our house at dusk, the television on in our family room and the yellow evening light coming in, [illegible] my mother did the dishes. My father, [illegible] had set this time aside for what re[illegible] ward to the moment when I had some [illegible] two lawns in the deepening light. Some[illegible] I never probed it, or never far; something was stopped there, something had achieved perfection. I felt oddly freed by the feeling of unsettledness I had as I climbed [illegible] Romanos'.

There, the scene was always repeated, always alike—Matt Romano would answer the door and look at me as if he had never seen me before and had no idea what I was there for. Seconds [illegible] then [illegible] that had finally risen into his consciousness. I was the boy who mowed their lawn, the neighbor's son come looking for money. He seemed, in his half-unbuttoned white shirt and black dress pants, to have emerged recently from a scene [illegible] agitation that made me think at any second a wild gesture might spring forth, though he would only reach into his pocket and count out eleven dollars, and as he spoke, in the transparent effort he made to be kind, I [illegible] this in. The single instance Stella Romano appeared behind him, it was the cagey, frightened look of a keeper that she wore, she drew him back when he began to speak to me. His words were slurred, I doubt I even heard him. She must have been afraid, though, of what he might say. She drew him back [illegible] one hand, and as I turned to her [illegible] the haunted look in his eyes, the [illegible] that drunks get when they want [illegible] ribly, to be understood. There seemed [illegible] to be in it some message meant [illegible] rectly for me. But it, too, was lost. [illegible]

or the other of them [illegible] the door.

It doesn't seem at all strange to [illegible] how little my life that summer had to [illegible] with the outside world, the world [illegible] my peers, how fully and simply [illegible] inhabited that neighborhood. I don't think my evening bike rides ever took me beyond the street, or the sandlot that announced foundations that would soon be built on the new cleared lots opening into the forest. Sometimes at dusk I wandered through the skeletons of houses that were still just wood, identifying the rooms. If I saw a man walking past—Steve Delosa with his dog, Al Zagni whistling—I would stare hard at [illegible] too, waiting for the image to reveal its deeper truth. The intuition that guided my days was that something was about to be shown to me, some fact about life I had to be alert for, [illegible] thing that might free me from what, even then, I could see was not a usual infatuation.

In September, they decided to throw themselves a ball. It did not seem extraordinary, though a far cry from the parties where the men dressed as women. The women were to purchase gowns; the men, tuxedos. I don't think the ball was the Romanos' idea exactly, but I believe it was because of the Romanos that a change occurred. Within a year, the raucous Saturday night cross-dressing became a thing of the past.

There was a school dance that Saturday night, but I didn't go. Instead I sat in my house and waited for my parents to appear, dressed for the occasion. The Noceras joined my parents for a pre-ball drink, but there was tension as soon as they came in. Elena Nocera seemed uncomfortable, as if wanting to be sprung from the tight white gown she wore, to put her feet up and make one of the ribald comments that were her trademark. Charlie Nocera, too, looked fidgety in his tuxedo. But my father moved about

rooms, appearing purposefully stiff, though guided by the stately mea- res of a piece of music none of the st of us could hear. "I have a brandy, narlie," he asked, and went to pour Charlie Nocera put his hands in s pockets. Elena made a joke. My other, in her yellow gown, sat as if in rance.

When they had all gone into the omanos', I stood at the foot of their wn to see what I could of the party. Bay window, twelve feet across, cast light onto the lawn. A single birch se up in front, stark and long-trunked. hrough its leaves, I watched the pas- l women pass, the men in black suits. att himself came for a moment and ood at the window. I don't believe saw me. One hand was in the pock- of his tuxedo pants, the other held ong-stemmed drink. On his face was at by now familiar, wistful sugges- on that what was most dear to him, ost essential, existed elsewhere. I was re he was going to step away, come tside, drive off. Around his body was at slight, subliminal blurring, as in a n, where you know an action is forth- ming, and I understood it was the tion I'd been waiting for. I might ve been coaxing him, hoping for the sture, the tug of the rope with which the scenery might be lifted away d the mechanics of this world re- aled to me so that I might see it, at t, for the blunt thing it was. But all did was turn away. He went back to e party. The movement of the room emed to slow down and gather ound him, as if he had gotten lost an outing, stopped somewhere to t a closer look at some amazing, iefly glimpsed thing, and now the others had formed a party to carry him away from it.

I am sorry to say that after that ght, or soon after, I began to change new school year had begun, ditter- t from the one before, circumstances nverged in a way that made me grow ore interested in myself, less so in the orld around me. I lost the perfect tward attunement of a fifteen-year- l boy, and never again recovered it. let me say, instead, that I found it, had it thrust on me, on only two ner occasions, so that what might ve been a rich, dark, satisfying sto-

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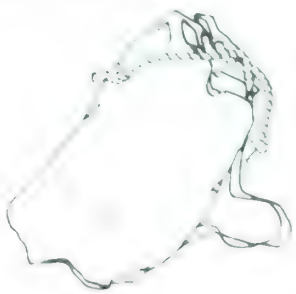
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I some darker assessment was taking ce in his eyes. Hatred would be too ng a word for it, but it was not imssible to imagine, from that look, it in other circumstances he might ve been about to get up and hit Matt mano. My father leaned back in his air with one finger pressing against side of his lips—his thoughtful, imtient pose. Steve Delosa glanced off the neighboring trees, waiting for nething to pass.

All of this took place in a matter of onds, and within it, I saw Matt Romo watch them all, quietly defiant. he cut of his jib." It was not lanage any of them would ever have ed; he had brought it from somenere else and held it before them e a sign of his dual citizenship, his ility to escape their closed little rld, if it came to that. They all knew is: they were antagonists at heart. l their silent acceptance of Dolores, his transgression of the rules, felt ou, to erupt. Instead, the unexcted, habitual thing happened. meone said something, to offset the nsion. Matt Romano's face turned im. Whatever he was seeing took form in the space between him and e men. He considered it, then lowed his eyes. He leaned back in his air and crossed his legs. From a disnce, it might have appeared as ough an ease had returned to the ene. A breeze made the tops of the es move. Elena Nocera, grinning widely, came out with iced tea.

Finally, we are all on the water, in y father's boat. It is a twenty-seven-ot cabin cruiser, docked in Glouces-r. The family sleeps on it Saturday ghts in summer; on Sundays the ighbors come. Before noon, they nerge at the top of the ramp, holdg coolers, picnic baskets. But now I no longer interested in them. It is o summers later, 1967; they have ne from being gods to being jokes. ot their fault, entirely, or mine. Even yond my seventeen-year-old conousness, a passage was going on. ey were all suburban Democrats in n-Lon pants, and they were being oved, ungently, from the center of e visible universe to some laughle periphery.

Still, they acted as though they hardly knew this. On Sundays they cooked steaks and drank beer and told loud jokes at which they laughed too long. My invisibility, once so precious to me, seemed another count against them. I could not understand how they remained so fascinated by themselves and one another. I felt they should turn to me now, that it was my life that was about to become important.

In one of the home movies of his later years, my father did something private, for himself. I came upon it once by accident, looking for something else. On a day when they must have been alone together on the boat, he filmed my mother. She is not doing anything dramatic or particularly interesting. For long stretches, she eats, she puts on sunglasses, she sits staring upward at the sun. She faces him and speaks. There is no sound to the film, so there is only her mouth moving, and the sight of her body, in a one-piece bathing suit. The light is overbright, the water an impossible blue. He holds the camera a long time on her, as though not willing to turn away.

But that was later, all my understanding came later. That day in 1967 I was entirely blind to it. Dolores was still there among them. She might have been thirty then. If there had been delicacy and ripeness to her at the beginning, it was starting to go. Her belly fell into tight ridges that clung to her ribs when she sat. Though she didn't speak often, her voice, when she did, no longer sounded hopeful and tentative and waiting to hear the great defining thing. She was like someone's niece who ought to have been at another party, one with young lawyers and daiquiris, but no one had the grace to tell her so. It had to come through an action.

It was a big party that day: us, the Noceras, the Delosas, Matt Romano, Stella and Dolores. Six children altogether. It was my job to steer, which I didn't mind doing. I kept a transistor radio at the helm; Top 40 blocked them out. They sat in deck chairs; the women put on kerchiefs to keep their hair from blowing in their faces.

We made a wide circle of the harbor, then edged under the narrow bridge into the Annisquam River toward Wingaersheek Beach. For the most part, that day would have been a day like any other. We always anchored the boat along the mile-long tongue of white sand that stretches from the mouth of Wingaersheek. The dinghy we carried on our stern would have brought the women in to shore. Then laughter as they tried to go from dinghy to sand without getting wet, and my father, on the outboard motor, would have made a joke, and shook the boat, to make them nervous.

The men usually chose to swim in, to make big awkward dives and thrash through the water, then emerge, sleek-headed and dripping, before a dry, fully clothed woman. Then the women would have stripped down to their bathing suits, blankets would have been laid out, cigarettes lit.

The only awkwardness—too familiar now for anyone to pay much attention—would have been Matt Romano's emergence from the sea. Dolores stood waiting. She watched him swim in, always, as if at any moment he might be lost forever. Stella would not be so overt: she'd busy herself with the children, the two dark-haired girls. Age had made them lithe, more physical, and Stella was awkward as she ran after them. Little attention as I paid (I stayed on the boat, with one of my sisters; we read paperbacks), I can see the choice as it might have appeared to him that day. Stella, who had put on weight, who rarely in those days allowed herself to be seen in a bathing suit. A yellow or pale-green dress flapping against her white legs, the jewelry she was never without—necklace, rings—making a sparkle in the sun. Her hair would fly backward in the wind, her profile standing out, unadorned. Then Dolores, at a distance, arms crossed, a bit impatient. Still, nothing attached to her, no children; she was merely what she was, a woman who had waited a long time for him to make up his mind. One of the men might have come up to her and made a joke—"Look, he's not as quick as he used to be!"—and then she would have laughed edgily and looked at Matt Romano splashing through the sea until some presentiment of the hugeness of her risk made her shiver. Seeing this, his mind would be made up for him, at least for the



d he'd go to her, to reas-

I caught sight of this and pre-

by then, there had to be a mo-

when the facade began to crack. Steve

put out a cigarette, with

in the sand. Everyone would know what he meant; even Matt Romano would register it.

But after a while things would slacken, the rhythms of the afternoon would take hold. Cigarettes would be smoked, conversational topics broached. What might have compelled them in the summer of 1967? The advent of the hippies in San Francisco? Lyndon Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War? A sale at Penney's? The words would have floated on the air, the way they do on a beach, important for a moment, then gone, as if they'd never been said. Elena Nocera would have lain back and made a joke about her legs. One of the men would have readjusted his bathing suit to free his balls. They'd watch the younger couples as they strolled this length of sand, or make note of the other vessels, or turn in the opposite direction from shore, where the dune grass glistened in the white heat.

It would have been that kind of afternoon. Insignificant. The sun would gradually lower in the sky, and it would be lost, a day gone. Half a mile distant, blankets would have been gathered off the crowded beach, the small exodus to cars begun, thoughts returning to Monday, to the question and the problem of work. For them merely a reflex, that, and then a deeper sinking into the day, the stretching out of legs. What anxiety did "work" have for any of them? Headaches, yes. Problems with suppliers, arguments, but all this would come and go, it was tomorrow's business. They were lucky, and they knew it. They had survived to this point in their lives, rich enough, without encountering any of the stickier problems—all but the Romanos, that is. Tonight the men would make love to their wives the way older men do in summer, when the rising of the skin seems to have less to do with a particular woman than with the quality of the day, and you try to get it in the last light, where the vestigial some old existence, one you perhaps never actually lived, seem to lie in wait. On the beach the men would have thought of all that, and the grap stayed later than anyone else.

By the time they finally gathered their things, the water would have darkened, fishing boats coming in with their entourage of gulls, and their bellies would have gone heavy, resistant to the transition back to boat, to car. My father pulled the dinghy, loaded with women, through the shallows until the water reached midway up his thighs, then he'd heave himself on board. Another joke, more laughter, his head with its gray nest of hair and then his body, as he half stood to jerk the motor into life, flinging toward me the brief, unwelcome awareness that he was still vital, still fucked my mother, a terrible thing to know but something he was resplendent with as he poised the dinghy toward the boat, where I waited with my sister and our novel. The women's faces on the dinghy, the sun behind them, were red, their hair lightened by the salt, and their boobs had the soft-shoulderedness of women who had recently been pleasured. It was as if my father were riding a harem across this weedy patch of sea, a harem of contented, middle-aged women.

Only one thing was interesting that day: Dolores, among them, on the dinghy, and I don't think I'd even remember how she looked if it wasn't the last time I was to see her. Straight-backed with resistance, she sat in sunglasses, her proud little body thinner than anyone else's. She would not give herself over to the happy ease of the boat; if once she'd felt close enough for them to joke, to share secrets, those days were over. She had grown careful to mark out her boundaries and move within them with precision, so that while the thighs of Mary Delores and my mother might have been touching, their sweatshirted shoulders indistinguishable, you saw all the space around Dolores.

They came to the boat and unloaded, my father made playful little grabs for their calves, and immediately they busied themselves, putting away blankets, getting out robes

come their children, who were still
nore with the men. None of them
ched what was going on there, not
ne beginning.
ly father had returned and was in
process of getting each of the chil-
n loaded into the boat, outfitting
n first with life preservers. There
just room, with children on their
, for the three men as well, though
ade the boat ride low. I saw Matt
nano put out his hand after lift-
his daughters in and my father
e an answering gesture, beckoning
. These were repeated, and Matt
nano stepped away from the boat.
father looked at him a moment,
noving, with just the focus of the
ers on the boat to tell me he was
ng something. Matt Romano low-
l his hands into the water, and my
er started up the motor. Someone,
of the women, said, "He's going to
n," and then another—not Stella,
Dolores—said, unworried, factu-
It's too far."
The tide had come in enough so
the distance was, in fact, signifi-
t. I didn't doubt, though, that he
ld make it. He was no more than
y then and had a strong body. He
ved out to where the water was
st-deep and watched the progress
he dinghy until my father had
hed us and we all had begun help-
the children on board. Only when
ryone was recovered did he begin
swim, and I was prescient enough
n then to understand that, for some
on, he wanted us to watch him.
ly father was still standing on the
ghy, but after Matt Romano had
m twenty or thirty feet he decid-
here was no reason not to lift it and
k it to the back of the boat. As
lid so, a look passed over his face,
nnoyed look. Charlie Nocera had
e and stood beside me to watch his
ghbor swim. I could feel the tension
is body even a foot away, and it
n't an ordinary tension. Something
ameable was happening. It could
e been the most commonplace of
gs—a man swimming a long dis-
ce—or it could have turned into
ething else. Charlie and my fa-
didn't know yet. That Matt Ro-
o insisted that life could be lived
erently than they lived it was the
of sand under their suits, the thing

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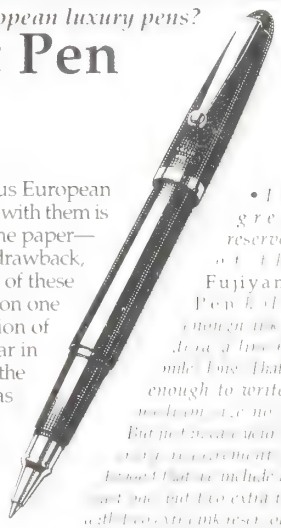


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... ecretes operations in the world.

Military Security—The Golan is ... 10 miles wide, with a plateau on ... side of a crest. If it were part of Syria it would be less than 1% of its territory. But it is of a supreme strategic importance to Israel. Its high ground provides early warning capability, without which Israel would be subject to surprise attack by the Syrians. Its loss would obligate Israel to maintain a state of readiness and mobilization that would be economically and socially untenable. On the Golan itself, there are only two natural terrain bottlenecks through which tanks can advance. Those choke points are defensible and made possible the repulse of the 1400 Syrian tanks that attacked Israel in the 1973 war. But with the Golan in Syrian hands, and without the radar installations that would give Israel warning of any military movements, thousands of tanks backed up by missiles and airplanes could overrun Israel in a matter of hours. The Golan does not make for perfect defense, but it gives Israel a small breathing space for mobilization.

> With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction."

Syria and ... ism—

of which Syria totally rejects.

Syria's President, Hafez Assad, is a tyrant, every bit as cunning as his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam Hussein. Under Assad Syria is a world center for terrorism. It still harbors Nazi bigwigs who found welcome there after the World War. Few doubt that Assad was the mastermind in the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans died, and in the explosion of PanAm flight #103 in which 270 people lost their lives. He oversees one of the

Water—The Golan is the source of over one-third of Israel's fresh water. In 1964, with the Golan in Syrian hands, Syria attempted to divert these headwaters and to cripple Israel's water supply. It is more than likely that, given another opportunity, Syria would once again attempt to destroy Israel's water supply.

The current Israeli government, in its keen desire to bring peace to its people, after almost fifty years of war and bloodshed, would seem prepared to give up the limited strategic security it now enjoys by virtue of its possession of the high ground the ridges of Judea Samaria (the "West Bank") and of the Golan Heights. But Israel should not return to the "death trap" borders of 1967 or anything close to it. In order to survive within such borders, Israel would have to rely on the goodwill of the Arab states, all of which except for the cold peace with Egypt are still in a declared state of war with Israel. An aggressor will attack only if confident of victory. With the Golan in Israeli hands attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat, and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction.

FLAME
... Box ... ■ ... Francisco, CA 94159

... could remove it they ... it was elusive, it might not be ... and they thought it was, so they ... feared the clean action that ... stop him in his tracks. They could ... ly wait and see.

So he swam, and we watched ... the black knot of his hair dipp ... then rising, his Indian's beak of a ... coming up, his wide back glisteni ... the sun, until someone started to ... tice what was happening.

It was barely detectable at first ... was veering off course, but just sl ... ly, and it could have been no ... than a trick of light that he appe ... to be making no progress towar ... We were so taken in by his imp ... sive swimming that it didn't s ... quite possible that another force ... invisible one might be rendering ... that beautiful effort in vain. "The ... rent's taking him," one of the ... said, finally. He began to slow do ... ter a while and then you could s ... more clearly, how it was pulling ... the late-afternoon tug of the tid ... strong on that part of the river ... must have been fifty feet upriv ... us when he lifted his head.

She was beside me then, nes ... between myself and Charlie No ... but not aware of either of us. She ... come to the railing to look, and ... there was that space around her, ... she believed this display was for ... alone.

It had that quality to it, his mon ... of failure, because I believed the s ... thing, that it was for me. His head ... lifted now and he was looking at ... though not yet willing to ask for h ... Instead, he seemed deliberatel ... choose this moment, to hold it ... and out of time, as a kind of invita ... to all of us to see him, as he floa ... helpless, for what he was, here ... now, for his weakness, to be accep ... for all that he could not quite do.

We all took it in; there was ... lence on the boat. I was disappoin ... above all other things. I had nee ... very badly, to see him as someone ... pable of breaking free of this beaut ... closed world, if he only chose, ... now, as I watched him, watched ... face, which made no effort to exc ... his moment of shame, I saw that ... had been caught by it, was, in f ... the same as them, in love with so ...

ng closer to death than to life. Fi
ly, he let the current carry him up
river until it deposited him on the
re.

As we watched this, I felt the move
nt of Dolores's body in front of me.
'd gone very close to the railing
w her shoulders lowered, and the
ips of the vertebrae along her back
ded. It was enough to let me know
nething. My father lowered the
ghy again, his expression was more
stied now. The rest of us watched
nake sure Matt Romano made it to
re, and then my father, floating,
ed, "Anybody want to come for a
?"

As it turned out, both of the other
n wanted to come with him. Matt
surfaced far upriver, so as they
red toward him they made a diag-
l into the sun. I remember their
nded, coarse backs on the boat. I
ember, too, how it occurred to me
, for them, this was not entirely
xpected, this turn of events, that
long they had known what would
e to happen to him, and had treat-
im more or less like a child who
ld, in time, understand. Only I
been fooled into believing there
was, for him, some possi-
bility of escape

took twenty years before the life
gave himself over to that day fi-
y killed him. Heart trouble had
arently started much earlier, but
e than for most men, the passage
age fifty to sixty had a wasting ef-
My wife and I went to visit him
Stella when we were newly mar-
they had dogs then. We were big
our romance, and all I remem-
ny wife and me doing was talking
it ourselves, giving details of our
estic arrangements, our studio
tment in New York, places we had
eled and were going to travel. He
ned, and at one point I thought I
the old contemptuous look come
his face. It was just after Christ-
and he lifted one of the opened
es in their living room. I leaned
ard, relieved, thinking he was go-
to show me one of his gifts, when
enly, and with majestic fierceness,
sed it to sidearm one of the dogs.
hat's all much later; I'm getting
d. But there wasn't a lot left to

that day really. Memory closes down on it, as if it wants to see the end there. He's onshore, waiting for them, his hands on his hips. He doesn't look embarrassed. He's standing straight, merely waiting. Maybe he's calmer now. Something has been settled on, after a long effort. They come in close, the three men, and move over for him, and he steps in and settles among them on the boat, and the four of them ride toward us, black, faceless figures with the sun behind them, and when I look again, she is not there anymore. Without my quite knowing it, Dolores has slipped from her position before me, so that as the dinghy comes very near, I feel a shiver of apprehension that there is no longer anything standing between me and him. ■

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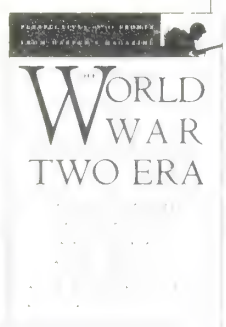
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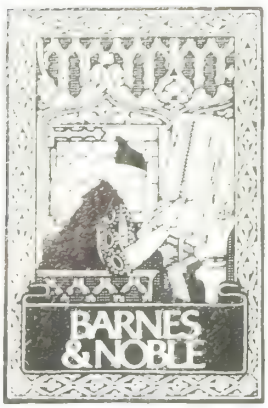
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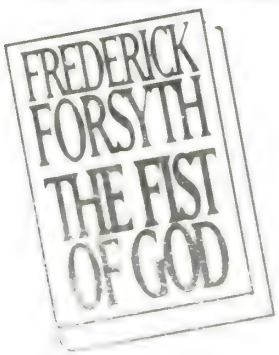
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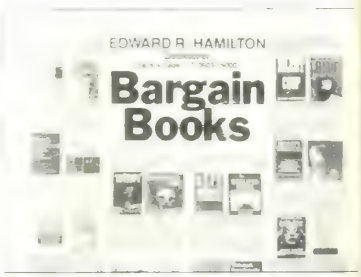
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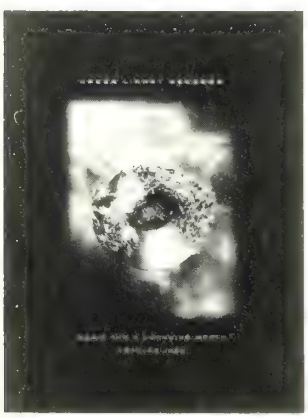


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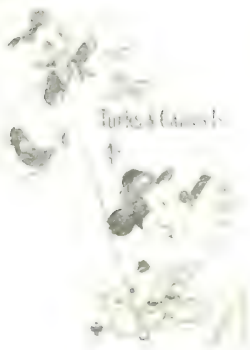


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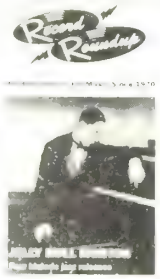
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A DEMOCRATIC DAWN

Election Day in South Africa

By André Brink



W

that we returned only

weeks in France, taxed by the accumulated ta

of travel, but simply be

Atwell's name is really longi and-

match the person he has adopted for his job as a gardener. He has a small farm in Transkei, a Black homeland

in Cape Town, saving up for the

versation, but on this particular April

he doesn't bother to inquire about our trip or to solicit any comment on the immaculate state of the garden left to his care. All he asks, [illegible] in his usual outfit and pinched in an unusually natty outfit, is, "When

I'll check with Marésa, I inform him. Last night's television preview [illegible] made us reluctant to brave the early-morning queues. Even though the election is the sole reason for our return from France, there is no need to provoke unnecessary punishment.

[illegible] the bed

[illegible] Marésa, as already turned on the TV. Not

an auspicious be n ning to the day: h bomb blast at a Smuts airport in Jo hannesburg, chao polling booths all o the country. The n nouncers are do their level best to p prove on their o records of vaguen and confusion. (South African me are sitting on one the stories of the c tury, a British journ commented over weekend, yet all t can manage to b dull. There will be pendous proof of it as the day folds.) Filled with dire forebod having been informed over the week of the apocalyptic expectat sweeping the country, we imm ourselves in the day. Marésa tac the first bundle of washing and a *bredie*, a stew, going; I venture into the cold gray gloom.

"When are we going to vote?" Atwell as I open the garage door. has not yet made any attempt to change his election outfit for his den gear.

"By midday," I inform him. "T queues are too long right now."

"Is that what Marésa says?" inquires. He has always been luctant to take my word for a thing; I am not, and he know

ressingly well, a practical person.
"That is what Marésa says,"
I confirm. "*And* the televi-
sion."

Outside the café where I go for
newspapers and some milk and
t juice (in defiance of reports over
last fortnight about South Africans
ining out supermarkets to stock up
an expected siege, we have made
vision for only our daily needs), a
ck man in blue overalls is strug-
g against the gusty northwester to
a cigarette going. "Fukkit," he
mbles after each spent match.
kkit, fukkit." It isn't clear whether
s referring to the frustration of his
e to smoke, or to the wretched
ather, or even to the elections.
nside the café, the Muslim owner
his family and a gangly bearded
te youth are watching images of
bomb blasts on the flyspecked
en of the TV perched on the cold-
ks fridge. "It's these Dutch who are
ng it," pronounces the young man
great conviction. "That's why I'll
er vote for the National Party."
return home. Both papers have
t-page reports on the lowering, at
lnight, of the old Union flag and
hoisting of the bold and bright
one. The *Cape Times* carries pho-
aphs of both events; true to form,
Burger, an Afrikaans paper that
ports the National Party, features
the demise of the old
hang out the washing. Atwell ap-
rs round the corner. "When are
going?" he asks.
Later," I assure him. "Have you
shed weeding the herb garden?"
There is the accumulated work of six
ks to attend to, for even on his-
c days ordinary life goes on. Not
hout interruption, though. The
ne keeps on ringing. Newspapers,
o and television stations from Paris,
sinki, Copenhagen, London,
ne, Jerusalem, Washington, want-
comments, demanding interviews
sorry, I tell them brightly, Mr. Brink
way. I have no phone number for
. The sorting of the work proceeds
its and starts. In the background
TV is coursing steadily through
day's chaotic progress. (Mandela.
W. de Klerk. Blithe or harassed
espersons of the Independent Elec-
toral Commission. The First Lady: *I only hope*, says Marike de Klerk, *that the new South Africa will still have a place for the values we have all grown up with.* Ah, brave new world.)

A knock on the door. "Is it not time now?" asks Atwell.

"I'll come and tell you," I promise. "Why don't you trim the edges of the lawn in the meantime?"

He utters an undefinable sound and ambles off.

The weather is getting worse. I remember a Christmas Day when I was five or six: playing outside with my presents, I stopped to gaze up at the fierce blue sky that seemed no different from other days. Surely, I thought, on Christmas Day there ought to be a special look about the sky to *tell* us that it's a special day. Today's leaden skies bear no exceptional message either, and yet this is the hinge where future turns on past, where everything is supposed to change, to change utterly. (On the day after Mandela's release from prison in 1990, a journalist in Grahamstown took to the street for comments from ordinary citizens. "And how do *you* feel," he asked a black hawker sitting beside her wares on the pavement in front of a store, "about Mandela being free?" The woman looked at him placidly. "I still have trouble selling my vegetables," she said.)

A knock on the door. Atwell presents a pair of broken shears; from a pocket he produces his voluminous white alarm clock. "It is now fifteen minutes past eleven," he says.

I know when I am beaten. "All right, we can go now."

We have consulted with friends on the telephone; the Mowbray polling station closest to our house is reported to have a shorter queue than most others. With a sense of historical fulfillment we set out. What we do not know is that the confusion in the black township of Khayelitsha, where no ballot papers have been delivered, has resulted in busloads of voters being transported to Mowbray. When we arrive there, just as the rain begins to come down, the tail of the queue, four or five abreast, reaches hundreds of meters to the speedway and halfway back. This is going to take at least two hours, I tell Atwell.

"We stay," he says.

"Not in this rain," says Marésa. "I'll vote tomorrow." She drops off the two of us with a black umbrella and drives home for raincoats, which she delivers ten minutes later. By that time we are already swept up into the waiting crowd and the line behind us is lengthening. The pouring rain, it turns out, unifies human souls and bodies. Holding the umbrella over Atwell's head and mine, I find both my arms pushed heavenward, like those of an ancient Moses blessing the promised land, as two women duck under for protection; at least four more people huddle against us to find some semblance of shelter.

> THE WAIT SEEMS INTERMINABLE. YET THERE IS AN EXUBERANCE IN THE CROWD. WE ARE THE RAINBOW OF SOUTH AFRICA

"This is a blessed day," announces a solemn young man behind us, beaming upward into the rain.

So begins a memorable wait.

There are brief letups in the rain, but the earth is soggy and everybody is bedraggled and spattered with mud; yet there is a buoyancy, an unrestrained exuberance in the crowd. We are representative of the whole rainbow of South Africa, all shades from shiny boot-polish black through various browns and ochers and beige to the many shades of pale that pass for white; in the common predicament of the bad weather and the shared experience of waiting—throughout the seemingly interminable day I remind myself that in a language like Spanish the word for "waiting" also means "hoping"—pools of conversation in the long crowd spill into one another to form one moving river of talk: bantering, encouraging, teasing, laughing, sharing, in Xhosa and Sotho and English and Afrikaans. Businessmen and street sweepers, academics and domestics, society ladies and chars, the affluent and the jobless, all mingle easily, even enthusiastically. (What is going





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one stage, and since it is obvious we have the time, why don't I give him some notes on a prescribed book he is having some problems with? It becomes a full-fledged lecture.

Half past four. We are now at the edge of the sports complex, which serves as the voting center. Occasionally the conversations falter and subside; people are really getting exhausted now. But what the hell. Every inch one shuffles along is a step closer to that consummation. Here we've been waiting for six hours; some of these people have been waiting for thirty, forty, fifty, sixty *years*. The country has been waiting for three and a half centuries.

Five o'clock. We are very close now. And each face emerging from those big doors ahead carries the radiant message of fulfillment, of a joy too great to express in words. New ripples of cheerfulness beset the crowd. We have all become members of one vast extended family. Black, brown, white: in the course of this one day a small miracle has been taking place. A short week ago some people had begun to barricade themselves in their homes, expecting a wave of violence to sweep them today. What is happening here is the opposite. We are discovering through the basic sharing of this experience, that we are all South Africans. It is as simple and momentous as that. Most of us will return to our separate existences tomorrow, but the commotion of the coming days, months, years, much of this day will fade. But there is one thing we can never forget: the knowledge of having been here together; the awareness of life, a country, a humanity we share, achieving what has seemed impossible we have caught a glimpse of the possible.

Half past five. Atwell and I have reached the threshold. Briefly, we look at each other. We put our hands on each other's shoulders. Then we go in, each on his own, but sharing a small precious moment of history.

It takes only a minute. We return from the cubicles, Jongiban and Bantsa and I. Marésa is waiting to take us home. It is over. It will never be over.

CONFESSIONS OF A NAME-DROPPER

Dash Butler, Meet Outerbridge Horsey

By Don Asher

ve never been one of
coterie of die-hard Bob
m fans—I grew up in a
rent musical era—but
ermanently endeared
self to me in the Sixties
n he responded to an
lviewer's hypothetical
tion, "What would be
first act if you were
ted president of the
ed States?" Dylan's an-
r: "Make McGeorge
dy change his name."
ames irritate, amuse, se-
, pique, tease (cellist Yo
Ma), charm, bemuse, in-
disbelief (scientist
.H. Boot, co-inventor
ne multi-cavity mag-
on; cartoonist Berkeley
thed), flash like ban-
(Nobel laureate in
nistry John Warcup Conforth,
y Lattu Pincay Jr.), or brush the
like velvet (gospel singer Verlin
iles, actor Shane Rimmer, actress
Skye: say them soft and it's al-
like praying).

ome are too good to be true: clas-
pianist Emanuel Ax (catnip for
musicians; outsiders may not get
San Francisco criminal lawyer



LeRue Grim, screenwriter Babaloo Mandel, ex-Secret Service agent Rufus Youngblood (he shielded LBJ during the fateful Dallas motorcade), Perot campaign director Orson Swindle, FBI agent Hufty Covert, and commander in chief of U.N. troops in Korea General Charles Hartwell Bonesteel.

Does the job seek the name or vice versa? For stiff-upper-lip propriety bordering on the imperial, consider American diplomats Holsey G. Handyside, Viron Peter Vaky, G. McMurtrie Godley (President Dylan would have acted with dispatch), and the redoubtable Outerbridge Horsey. Were their parents stoned or visionary? In any case, the gentlemen seemed born to ambassadorships, minor cabinet posts. One could speculate that the Destinies were gathered round the cradles of pro footballers Thane Gash, Otis Sistrunk, Tunch Ilkin, and Godwin Turk. Was it not foreordained that Man Ray would become an artist, Jim Shoulders a world champion rodeo performer, and Denver Peckinpah a Far West superior court judge? No one should have been surprised when young Galway Kinnell and Guillaume Apollinaire eventually donned the poet's cloak, Jude Acers the chess master's crown.

A few years ago I began to notice in newspaper accounts a preponderance of quintessentially rube names touched with grandiosity among the corps of law-enforcement officers, from urban chief of police to rural constable. Valdon J. Burkett, Garand Gruber, Seals W. Swafford, Jere Beck, Thor (!) Fladwed, Surry Poole, Reno Rapagnani, J. R. Swicker, J. Bean Salmas, Code Wilkinson II (the list liberally sprinkled with pretentious initials and terminal Jr.'s, II's, and III's). In a profession not known for affectation or cultural

...who is a jazz pianist and a devotee of bel... ...ations on the musician's life. "Never ... the Bill With a Chimp," appeared in the ... 2000 issue of Harper's Magazine. His ... recent book, Notes From a Buttered ..., is published by Harcourt Brace.

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Xandria Collection

The Xandria Collection

chief, Dash Butler.) Since law enforcement tends to be a cottage in-

footsteps, are the fathers solely re-

ings—a mass floating of convention by

One finds a glut of Shirlees, Karils, Lauralees, Melodies. Perhaps the oddly named seek out one another like the magnet the tiling, the gum the shoe.

The extravagance, invention, hope, mumery, whimsy, love, mindlessness, and outright madness parents bring to the naming of a child! It is the infant's first caress, the breeze that fills his or her fragile sails, propelling the

Then why yoke twin boys with the names Adolf

of mine? One bears an ineradicable

his first week of life—sounds like an old man. The late photographer Imogen Cunningham dubbed her three sons Gryffyd, Rondall, and Cadriac. The meter is hypnotic, raising an echo of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Did the parents of Vane Vest, wondering which way the wind would blow for their son, have a premonition that he would benefit from a lambent airy signature befitting a future featured dancer with the San Francisco Ballet Company? The twin lures of alliteration and duplication generated the late psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, L.A. police chief Willie Williams, theologian Martin E. Marty, and former Kansas governor John St. John. All predilections to achieve celebrity, as did, to our regret, Sirhan Sirhan.

A

—setts, starting when I was four. My widowed mother was hired as dietitian and storeroom manager camp, and in lieu of salary my brother and I were enrolled fre ery camper had a nickname, ar bunk counselors were, for the part, imaginative in their assignm A few days into the summer the first names fell away for good years later you'd remember only drake, Rinso, Mahatma (a brow shriveled seven-year-old), Sha after the comedian, dog), Stringbean, Cupid, Ace Deuce (tennis-playing twins). the youngest camper my first temperamental and weepy, and most of my time warehoused in a box with a pail and a colorful of tiny shovels. Not unreasona got tagged Shovels. I didn't di cried bitterly. I wanted to be Bu in Rogers, or Jack, as in Arms My counselor felt the personas wrong. I kept howling. My m brought me a batch of cookies the storeroom to shut me up. counselor, watching me gobble grew pensive. To this day the campers I'm still in touch with—now in their sixties—address me man, as Cookie.

Whenever I run across nickn in the press, particularly the mor tic mobster pseudonyms—John ey the Lackey" Cerone, Anthon "Big Tuna" Accardo, Thomas Balls" Mancuso—I think of those mers among the tall Berkshire p The next time the Mafia hier passes out names I'd be happy t queath them Shovels, which, g the profession, could be assigne discriminately.

On the subject of ingenuity an sumed names, the dastardly James Ray (why are notorious culprit ways reported in the media with t full names?) showed consider imagination in concocting the Eric Starvo Galt while on the la lowing the King assassination, Lee Harvey Oswald a paucity fo use of "A. Hidell" on an invoice rifle. On a more exalted plane Ha Lavan Jr. deserves kudos—or wa press agent's idea?—for his stag vention, Van Cliburn. (Somehow knew up front it was a phony.) S memorable pseudonyms we almos gret. For the sake of a personal a

statement, turncoat novelist
ge Sand abandoned both her sex
her lilting birth name, Aurore
m Roy Rogers is unarguably crime
poke's name, but at the cost of
nard Slye. Piquant Concetta In-
a was abandoned for bland Connie
vens. And was raffish, bawdy Jel-
oll Morton worth the loss of Fer-
and La Menthe'
trippers, go-go girls, and topless
ormers have customarily displayed
ton flair in their noms de guerre
ing the Forties and Fifties I played
squadrons of exotic dancers in the
pike roadhouses of southern New
land. In fond memory Bella Adon-
Ginger Rhale, Rosetta Stone, Eve
erry, Beryl Bang! (exclamation
nt hers), and September Morn toss
r lovely heads.
ut none could hold a candle to
topless seventeen-year-old go-go
cer who in 1975 strutted her
es on the deck of the submarine
.S. *Finback* out of Port Canaver-
-the sailors adored her, the skip-
(intimations of Tailhook) was
sequently stripped of his com-
nd—the incomparable, insou-
e, insurmountable Cat Futch.
low do fiction writers name their
racters? According to Boris Paster-
's mistress (the model for Lara),
iration struck when he chanced to
down at a manhole cover dis-
ing the manufacturer's imprint,
/AGO.
Dickens, of course, was in a class
himself. Seth Pecksniff. Uriah
p. Judy Smallweed. (The modern-
fiction writer emulates the master
is peril. The galleys of a first nov-
nce came to me for promotional
from an editor whose cover let-
was wildly enthusiastic. I never
past the opening sentence. "Storm
ghter slept.") Nor was Groucho
slouch. Otis B. Driftwood. Rufus
irefly. Hugo Z. Hackenbush. (For
rles Schwab & Co.'s Hugo W.
ckenbush, currently an executive
president in the San Francisco
e, to have attained such a lofty
on the corporate ladder is little
t of astonishing. Talent aside, the
against his rise must have been
ering.)
small digression: the matter of

Continued on page 76

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Continued from page 75

Amy Carter's cat. I voted for her f
for president in 1976 and 1980
have no regrets, but the suspi
lingers that family caprice tarred
and may have contributed to his d
fall. There was brother Billy, of co
who pushed, among other thin
brew called Billy Beer, and "
peanut" nephew Willie Carter Sp
whose arrest record is longer than
Exxon Valdez. But how many rem
ber the lead weight that daughter
saddled her cat with? Misty Mal
Ying Yang. Should that have tol
something we'd have preferred n
know about this cur
Deep South clan?

My first date on arriving in
Francisco in 1959 was a blind
rangement with a beanpole blo
named Stanley. (One assumes her
ents' longing for a son was bey
control.) It didn't work out. Ma
she was way too tall for me. The
thing she said on opening her ap
ment door, gazing down on me wi
lopsided smile, was, "My God, y
have to shinny up me like a lamp
just to kiss me." I totally forgot
until years later when I encount
her in a restaurant bar, waiting f
table. The sheer height of her, the
picion that if she smiled the sr
would be crooked, rang a far-off
I said, "I know you from somewhe
She sipped her cocktail, dragged
her cigarette, and blew smoke d
on my head. "Rack your brain."
dated once or twice—once." "Yo
hot. What's my name?" For the lif
me I couldn't remember, but I kne
was masculine; I took a shot. "S
my?" The crooked smile surfac
"Close, but no Havana."

Another sour note: a former w
ress at the Café Majestic in San F
cisco, where I play piano music du
dinner, was named Charity. We wor
together several nights a week for
better part of a year. Yet each tin
addressed her my mind stalled, t
wobbled off on a tangent. The obv
mnemonic—Faith, Hope, Charit
failed to kick in. I called her alterna
Destiny and Chastity. She thoug
was toying with her. I explained ab
the aging process and short-term m
ory. She was not mollified.

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LETTERS

replies, obscuring the original message
contact present in a telephone conversation allows contributors to drift
a computer screen makes it easier to feel self-satisfied about always being right in one's own electronic world.

The weakness of the traditional, selective process that doesn't allow every book, article, essay, and offhand remark to be published and distributed around the world is that the people who make the selections don't always do their jobs perfectly. Worthwhile work is inevitably passed over, but at least *some* effort is made to judge on the basis of merit. In the "malleable" exchanges that Kelly praises, unexamined mumbling can be distributed as easily as brilliant thought. The ease and power of the Net to distribute information is a great improvement over paper, but there is no intrinsic value attached to writing on the Net. Indeed, wider and wider Net access may only make it harder to
what they are talking about.

Providence, R.I.

As I read and re-read Sven Birkerts's essay on the dangers of the Internet turning us all into a shallow and schizoid multitude, I could not help shuddering with an excitement I might even call electrical. He put into words the gnawing disquiet I had been feeling for years, long before the whir of the first disk drives. Yet Birkerts did not take his argument far enough.

I am not even old enough to remember life before television, but I would ask Birkerts to try and imagine a
back to the time when we were without
other object we now take for granted:
"
" without read-

ing about some new aspect of
formation highway, and this caus
wonder if people aren't getting
tle too excited about the promise
to/joys. But he never stops to qu
that which rests in his hands on
ly basis. Perhaps the nature of a
paper—dead tree pulp—does no
the zest of the Internet, but it has
the same things he complains a
Birkerts must notice the way th
ration" he values so highly—"ti
perienced without the awareness
passing"—is interrupted as we
from bunkers in Bosnia to the wh
contest in Westchester in the
a few pages. A newspaper, on av
probes no deeper than fourteen
inches. And when was the last time
per deliverer offered a real, humar

But let's not pick on only news
for fracturing time and experienc
a long time art galleries have
viewers from Pointillism to C
fast enough to make *them* heads
and a day in the theater threat
sprain mouth muscles as the aud
moves from laughs to frowns and
again. Even young Jessica's piano
wrecks the pace of our universe
moves from allegro to waltz, Beeth
to Bach. It isn't natural!

But what is natural? Eliminat
the ways we quick-order and cons
ideas, sounds, and sensations se
by others, and we might as we
hoeing the farm while we nurtur
thoughts. We should in that case,
gests Birkerts, know what a true
true thought, true mile, and true t
are really worth. Yet I ask him: th
he truly able to refuse the Net w
out regret, would he be willing to t
his printed words for the corn
again? Once there, would he truly
sider nature's offerings—the mi
drizzle; the nomad's visit; the o
sional, slow eclipse—art, incident,
information enough?

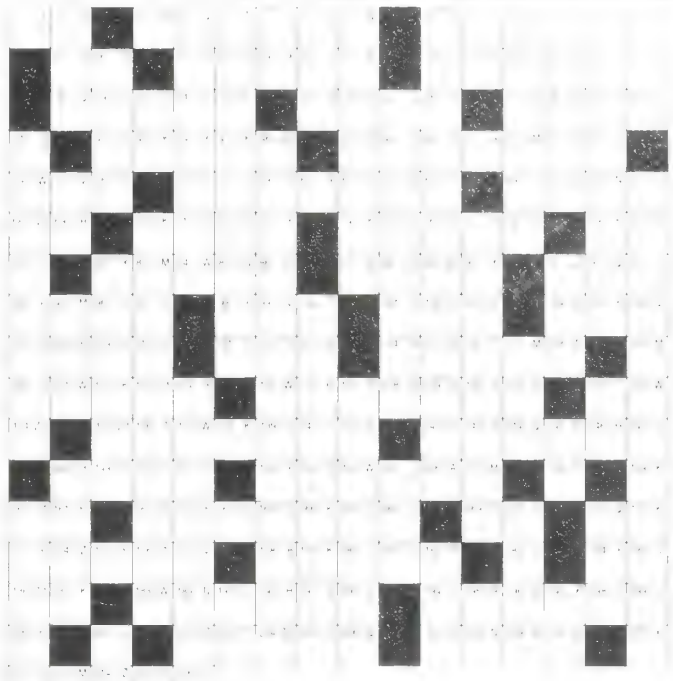
Birkerts is helpful when he so
quently tells readers to beware of
buzzing, but he must thank the
medium of *Harper's Magazine* for d
ering his message. In this way, too, h
lustrates the trade-off humans have
to make for centuries between the li
they do alone and the life they share
others.

Eric Larson
Anniston, Ala.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 140

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 73.



CLUES — WORDS

A. Primitive dwelling; shack; construction — 115 21 5 [illegible] 176 150

B. Ropes used for mooring — 58 115 175 161 138 77 16

C. Squire in *Tom Jones* — 205 40 210 165 169 101 96

32 26

D. Takeoffs, burlesques — 104 67 49 149 207 158 196

55

E. Not to be spoken; inexpressible — 175 163 [illegible] 52 17 [illegible] 30 192

78

F. Joints; short, close-fitting coats — 216 136 15 184 182 18 81

G. Am. novelist (1905–70; *Pal Joey*) — 85 6 164 131 61

H. Long-tailed Am. bird, genus *Quiscalus* — 200 148 27 57 146 126 191

I. Lotteries — 93 25 194 17 140 212 64

J. Burdensome; unjustly harsh — 39 129 24 29 168 20 150 34

[illegible] 45

K. "Then __! Grace and good disposition/Attend your ladyship!" says Viola (hyph., *Twelfth Night*) — 70 172 74 122 159 166 43 187

[illegible] 179

L. Besiege, buttonhole, urge — 183 1 22 120 180 111 155 199

139

M. Mischievous; improper, wayward — 53 51 [illegible] 119 157 [illegible] 113

N. Am. journalist and political leader (1811–72) sympathetic with K — 62 [illegible] 41 208 66 [illegible] 159

O. Eng. dramatist (1580–1625; *The Duchess of Malfi*) — 37 13 116 147 72 7 167

P. Thrust, momentum — 45 3 107 145 78 127 14

Q. Intoned; cautioned beforehand (2 wds.) — 206 185 106 92 144 103 4 [illegible]

R. Eng. philosopher and author (1588–1679; *Leviathan*) — 143 94 114 87 195 69

[illegible]

S. Aggregate — 125 23 141 [illegible]

T. 1933 Kern-Hammerstein song from *Roberta* — 151 63 97 [illegible] 102 203 100 136

[illegible]

U. Pen stroke gently — 142 58 109 215 91 53 88 190

V. Suspended — 113 [illegible] 22 [illegible] [illegible] 42

W. Effect (2 wds.) — 84 188 125 54 137 [illegible] 154 133

X. Republic N. of Israel — 197 19 211 44 [illegible] 82 90

Y. Skull, as a symbol of mortality (hyph.) — 81 173 132 [illegible] 86 77

[illegible] [illegible]

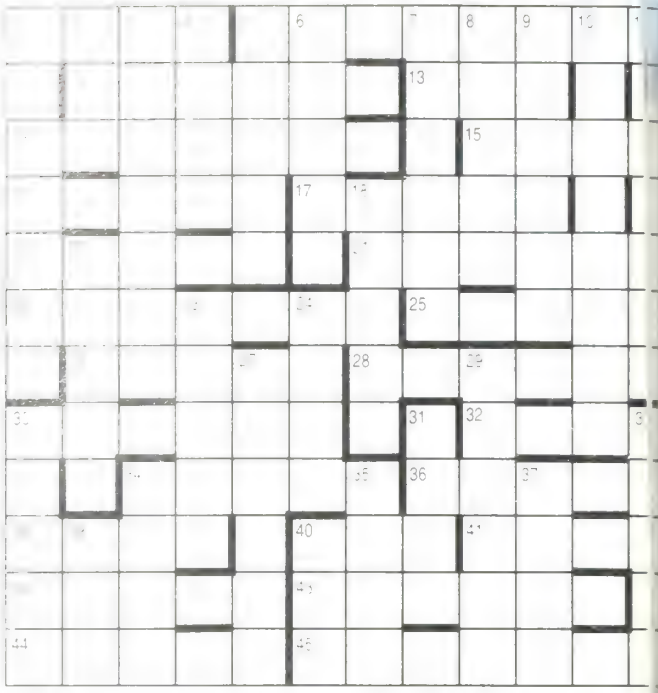
Z. Legitimate — 11 [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] 214 193 1 [illegible]

Z1. Patience, lasting quality — 123 86 68 162 [illegible] 186 47

Z2. Program for [illegible] reform, inaugurated in 1933 (2 wds.) — 46 204 75 134 30 89 52

Letter Perfect

by L. B. [illegible] and Richard Maltby Jr.



ACROSS

1. Gets rid of the dirt surrounding crazed VIPs (12)
9. What attracts bull? Someone stubborn, thanks (6)
14. Lacking backbone? In cast, that hurts (9)
15. Like a farm animal, or one found in nature running (7)
16. Parts of speech that tell what distinguishes old from (7)
17. Backing, e.g., Agnew, almost gets you pledge (6)
18. Sixteen badly sunburnt on the bottom, under the sun (8)
22. [illegible] (7)
23. [illegible] (7)
24. [illegible] (6)
25. [illegible] (6)
26. [illegible] (8)
27. [illegible] (8)
28. [illegible] (8)
29. [illegible] (8)
30. [illegible] (8)
31. [illegible] (8)
32. [illegible] (8)
33. [illegible] (8)
34. [illegible] (8)
35. [illegible] (8)
36. [illegible] (8)
37. [illegible] (8)
38. [illegible] (8)
39. [illegible] (8)
40. [illegible] (8)
41. [illegible] (8)
42. [illegible] (8)
43. [illegible] (8)
44. [illegible] (8)
45. [illegible] (8)

DOWN

1. Sleep-in ruined by bit of rum and beer (8)
2. Invalid left respirator, almost getting up (4)
3. Our hopes dashed, possessing nothing in this place! (9)
4. Old Israeli leader put gold into S&L (4)
5. Cumin she cooked for snacks (8)
6. Greek figure engineers uncrate (7)
7. Funny tot, one raised in German (7)
8. Lignum scattered around church protecting the plants (8)
9. Strange accent describes each Dolphin, e.g. (8)
10. Aboard bark I log ramrod's weight (8)
11. Been behind the ship's saloon without a license (7)
12. Old-fashioned made with half claret, half rosé (5)
13. I do sex when hallucinating with common chemical (7)
19. Revolution captures one Italian city (5)
20. Two bird traps endlessly endangered goose (4)
21. Becomes upset with proportions during climaxes (8)
22. Charge—minimal, one hears, for flaky pastry (6)
23. Some Asians in state, disturbed about British . . . (8)
31. . . . travel service holds otherwise (4)
33. Relieved, stopped losing head (5)
34. [illegible] (4)
35. Warning: ricotta goes bad (7, *two words*)
37. Greek information service I'd help out (6)
38. Parrot English poet, but not Eliot (3)
39. [illegible] (3)

[illegible] New York, NY 10012. It [illegible] to read in will [illegible] the June puzzle, Shark Chase [illegible] Magpie, Stamford, Connecticut.



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By Lawrence Weschler

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By George Plimpton

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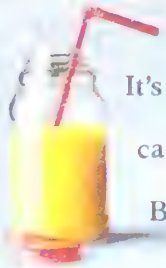
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SEPTEMBER 1994

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LETTERS

Separate and Unequal?

In his article "Can Separate Be Equal?" [June], James Traub presents a provocative view of the connection between segregated schools, inner-city poverty, and family dysfunction in Hartford, Connecticut. He makes a powerful case against both the "effective schools" movement, now popular in magnet schools, and "racially distinct" schools, increasingly favored by black parents. Traub demonstrates that neither good management and adequate resources nor greater control of curricula by black parents and teachers can compensate for the tremendous problems that afflict inner-city communities and families and educationally handicap their children.

Although I agree that offering these students access to schools in middle- and upper-class suburbs is a more promising solution than these other, trendy, educational reforms, Traub overlooks a major impediment to the success of any such effort: segregation *within* schools. Even if the powers that [illegible] student transfers from city to suburb that may result from a pending class-action lawsuit there (*Sheff* v. *O'Neill*), poor children and children of color may benefit less than he imagines from such transition. Because of academic "tracking," and other forms of educa-

students may end up having rela
little contact with their more a
white peers, and thus with the
and culture that Traub believes a
cial to academic success.

The combined middle and h
school I attended on Long Isla
the late 1970s and early 1980s o
an excellent example of this
nomenon. Approximately 15
of the students were black or H
ic, mostly from poor families, an
quarter were white children from
income or working-class fam
However, the accelerated classe
extracurricular activities that co
bound students flocked to (such
school newspaper), and the
groups structured around these
ities drew almost exclusively fro
upper-middle-class white student
lived in a different part of town
their poorer and non-white classm

Some of my fellow students be
doctors and lawyers. Others end
as auto mechanics. Still others dr
out or were passed along from o
medial class to another, ultimate
coming marginally employed or h
to rely on public assistance. Be
these outcomes correlated so str
with class (and, to a lesser de
race), one cannot help but w
whether the "mixed" nature
school had any practical effect on
children's lives.

While student transfers, o
kind Traub suggests, could be ac
panied by limitations on tracki
other efforts to combat intra-s
segregation, I suspect that any
measures would unleash a backlash



"I'm stopping to go to the bathroom more than ever now. I wonder what's wrong with me."

Your urinary symptoms may be caused by a condition called benign prostate enlargement or BPH. BPH is not cancer and does not lead to cancer, although the two conditions can exist at the same time. Remember, only a doctor can evaluate your symptoms and their possible causes.

this you?	Yes	No
you get up more than once or twice a night to urinate?		
you often have sudden, uncontrollable urges to urinate?		
you have a hesitant or slow urine stream?		
you have a frequent need to urinate?		

ou answered yes to even one question, tell your doctor.

Today, symptomatic BPH can be treated by your doctor in several ways. The options are monitoring the condition with regular checkups, surgery, or oral medicines. One oral medicine is PROSCAR, the only prescription medicine for the treatment of symptomatic BPH that can shrink the prostate.



The prostate surrounds the tube that carries urine from the bladder.

PROSCAR works by blocking a hormone that can cause the prostate to enlarge. *But it is important to know: PROSCAR doesn't work for everyone. Although the prostate may shrink, there may not be an improvement in urinary symptoms. However, in clinical studies with PROSCAR, some men have seen an improvement in their urinary symptoms after 2 weeks. Others have found that PROSCAR took up to several months to help them.* Because all men are different, you and your doctor will need to determine how PROSCAR is working for you.

If you have any urinary symptoms, see your family doctor or a urologist soon, and ask about PROSCAR. For free information to help you discuss your symptoms with your doctor, call 1-800-635-4452.

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Treatment options for BPH

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- Medication. PROSCAR for BPH. See **"What PROSCAR does"** below.
- Surgery.

What PROSCAR does

- You must see your doctor regularly.
- About side effects.

B[illegible] and not for cancer—but a man can have

checked for prostate cancer once a year when he's turn 50, or 40 if a family member has had prostate cancer). These checks should continue while you take PROSCAR. PROSCAR is not a treatment for prostate cancer.

- **About prostate specific antigen (PSA).** Your doctor may have done a blood test called PSA. PROSCAR can alter PSA values. For more information, talk to your doctor.
- **A warning about PROSCAR and pregnancy.**

PROSCAR is for use by MEN only.

PROSCAR is generally well tolerated in men. However, women who are pregnant, or women who could become pregnant, should avoid the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

If the active ingredient is absorbed by a woman who is pregnant with a male baby, it may cause the male baby to be born with abnormalities of the sex organs. Therefore, any woman who is pregnant or who could become pregnant must not come into direct contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR.

Two of the ways in which a woman might absorb the active ingredient in PROSCAR are:

Sexual contact. Your semen may contain a small amount of the active ingredient of the drug. If your partner is pregnant, or if you and your partner decide to have a baby, you must stop taking PROSCAR and talk to your doctor. If your partner could become pregnant, proper use of a condom can reduce the risk of exposing her to your semen. Discuss this further with your doctor.

Handling broken tablets. Women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant [illegible] PROSCAR.

PROSCAR tablets are coated to prevent contact with the active ingredient during normal handling. If this coating is broken, the tablets should not be handled by women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant.

If a woman who is pregnant comes into contact with the active ingredient in PROSCAR, a doctor should be consulted. Remember, these warnings apply only if the woman exposed to PROSCAR is pregnant or could become pregnant.

How to take PROSCAR

Follow your doctor's advice about how to take PROSCAR. You must take it every day. You may take it with or between meals. To avoid forgetting to take PROSCAR, it may be helpful to take it the same time every day.

Do not share PROSCAR with anyone else, it

Keep PROSCAR and all medicines out of the

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PROSCAR AND BPH, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR. IN ADDITION, TALK TO YOUR PHARMACIST OR OTHER HEALTH CARE

MERCK

suburban parents even more fer
than that which would accom
city-to-suburb transfers alon
course, this continues to be th
tragedy behind America's failure
liver on the forty-year-old promis
Brown v. Board of Education. As t
recognizes, the tolerance of ine
whites for desegregation, like any
er progressive social policy, is and w
has been inversely proportionate
a vengeance, to its perceived eff
the material well-being of then
and their families.

Barry L. Fisher
Southern Center for Human Ri
Atlanta, Ga.

James Traub offers an insight
count of the huge disparity of
rarity that exists in Connec
public schools and points out this
ous conditions that resulted in
ing of the landmark desegregation
Sheff v. O'Neill. I was disapp
however, by his glib and cynic
portion of the state's actions, m
ed by recent legislation, to pr
quality and diversity as "farcical
cations" and with his conclusi
the process does "not inspire h
he's right, then what looks like
the disinterested observer quick
comes tragedy for those more intim
engaged in Connecticut's atten
right these grievous wrongs.

I, for one, am hopeful. Here's
The "mandatory talk," as *Sheff*'s l
John Brittain calls the plannin
cess, may not achieve the speci
rectives of his litigation, but
produce a climate for change th
already brought local citizens
discourse on educational "quali
"equity" and has helped them s
th roughly these two concepts
tertwined.

For years we have been cont
view educational quality in ter
the private benefits it confers o
viduals. But, lately, under pressure
the forces of global competitio
the erosion of domestic life, we h
tunted, in part, to an older, noble
private American notion of educat
the system does not prepare us
equitably—for participation
shared democratic community.

Continued on p.

NOTEBOOK

Terms of endearment

By Lewis H. Lapham

love the great pagan world, its blood-
its slaves, its injustices, its loathing of
at is feeble.

George Moore

ver the course of the summer I occasion to reread Marshall uhan's *Understanding Media*, and ough the argument of the book e a good deal more sense to me in than it did in 1964, it wasn't un- saw the white Ford Bronco pro- ing majestically north on the San go Freeway under a royal umbrel- f helicopters that I knew why. uhan had announced mankind's y return to the Elysian fields of itive consciousness, and here was word being made flesh in the hern California twilight. Well re the procession moved through Santa Monica Interchange, the s of O. J. Simpson's whereabouts reached Tokyo and Rome (i.e., villagers in the distant precincts of uhan's global village), and the rent crowds gathering under the lyptus trees on Sunset Boulevard come to pay homage to what pass- late-twentieth-century Ameri- r the presence of divinity. The tion of Simpson's guilt or inno- e wasn't as important as his de- t from the starry heavens of ork television—a demigod on rder of the doomed Orestes in from the pursuing Furies, his au- celebrity raised to the power of by the nature of his imagined . The Greek chorus standing by ide of the road held up signs say- REE THE JUICE while at the same waiting expectantly for Simpson pot himself in the head. The re- lidn't matter as much as the d promise of a miraculous event. fcLuhan had gone to no small le to explain, it was the medi- hat was the message, not the thing that was done or said.

Anticipating the rejuvenation of the cults of personality—the images of Michael Jordan and Madonna replacing those of Apollo and Aphrodite, Nancy Reagan arranging the affairs of state to coincide with her husband's astrological signs—McLuhan's argument infers the transposition of news into entertainment, history into legend and fable. He begins with the proposition that "we become what we behold," that "we shape our tools and afterwards our tools shape us," and then elaborates the premise by examining the diktats of two epistemological revolutions that overthrew a settled political and aesthetic order. First, in the fifteenth century, the invention of moveable type, which encouraged people to arrange their perceptions of the world in forms convenient to the visual order of the printed page. Secondly, in the late nineteenth century, the discovery of electricity and its subsequent applications (telegraph, telephone, television, computers, etc.), which taught people to rearrange their perceptions of the world in ways convenient to the electronic media.

Once having stated his proposition, McLuhan ascribes to the visual order of print the corollary structures of thought dependent upon sequence and straight lines—on roads, laws, empires, hierarchy, classification, the novels of George Eliot or Jane Austen. The electronic forms of communication eliminate the predominance of straight lines as well as the presumption of cause and effect, and by dissolving the dimensions of space and time, they invite ways of thinking that McLuhan describes as nonlineal, repetitive, discontinuous, intuitive, proceeding by analogy instead of sequential argument. The two sets of circumstance generate different systems of meaning that, translated very loosely from what I take to be McLuhan's dialectic, can be expressed as a series of antonyms. As follows:

authority	power
happiness	pleasure
literature	journalism
civilization	barbarism
will	wish
truth as passion	passion as truth
achievement	celebrity
science	magic
doubt	certainty
drama	pornography
history	legend
argument	violence
art	dream
politics	prophecy

The words in the right-hand column more or less correspond to the sensibility implicit in the weightless and self-referential world of the mass media—a world of icons engaging the viewer's participation in what McLuhan understood as a collective surge of intense consciousness ("a process that makes the content of the item seem quite secondary"), a world in which the stars of daytime soap opera receive 10,000 letters a week from fans who confess secrets of the heart that they dare not tell their husbands, their mothers, or their wives.

Better described as pre-Christian than postmodern, the pagan character of the electronic dispensation invests authority in persons instead of institutions. Names take precedence over things, the actor over the act, and within the enclosed and mediated spaces governed by the rule of images, the distinctions between fiction and fact melt, thaw, and resolve themselves into the malleable substance of docudrama.

When *Understanding Media* was first published in May 1964, McLuhan was an obscure professor of English at the University of Toronto, a gaunt and rumpled figure blessed with a talent for oracular statement—"The electric light is

easier to read than the collected works

But McLuhan was talking about the media as "make-happen agents," not as "make-aware agents," as systems similar to roads and canals, not as precious art [illegible] forms of literature, and he compared his critics to the medieval schoolmen who railed against Johann Gutenberg's typefaces as the precursors of intellectual anarchy and "the end of civilization as we know it." Against the more pompous members of the academy (those who insisted that all would be well if only the television networks would improve and correct the vulgar tone of their programming), McLuhan brought to bear a sardonic sense of humor, suggesting that in the twentieth century, as in the fifteenth, the literary man prefers "to view with alarm and point with pride, while scrupulously ignoring what's going on."

The remark could as easily have been addressed to some of the more self-important representatives of the news media who thought it well beneath their dignity to gossip about the progress of a Ford Bronco as if it were an emperor's carriage. As early as 7:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time, the networks had framed the procession with the significance of the Persian Gulf War, and they had hastily assembled the college of oracles to talk to the correspondents hovering over Brentwood. The correspondents knew that they were looking at very, very big news, but they didn't know what it was supposed to mean, and they were badly in need of guidance from New York. No script had been supplied to the studio TelePrompTers, and the oracles were as much at a loss for words as everybody else in the country. Here they all were—Rather and Brokaw and Jennings and Walters—settling on a story of murder and possible suicide like buzzards settling on the carcass of a sheep, but the position was not one that anybody was, as they say at Morton's, "comfortable with." Surely there had to be something more to the story, something important, for God's sake, some civilized message about sports, or the predicament of women, or racial prejudice, or the system of criminal justice—something that could be dressed up in the costume of an issue.

As the last of the natural light faded [illegible] Brentwood that already had become a forest shrine, at least eight channels were showing live footage of a white car, and the moralists in the broadcasting booths, still uneasy with the proceedings and failing to find anyone on whom to blame their embarrassment, comforted themselves with mortifications of their own flesh. It was the media that were at fault, the salacious, vulgar, prurient news media accusing the trinkets of cheap sensation. The anguished rending of garments simulated the effect of a roundtable discussion taking place in a college lecture hall under the rubric "Toward a Responsible News Media," and by the time Simpson showed up in court for his arraignment on the following Monday the journalistic acts of contrition had become as much a part of the story as the whereabouts of the missing glove or the exact placement and chemical composition of the bloodstains.

Still appalled by what he had seen in the slums of tabloid journalism, Peter Jennings that same afternoon admitted to one of his peers at the Washington *Post* that he had been profoundly unnerved by the experience. "After moments like that," he said, "we are reduced to roughly the same level of intelligence of the audience." *Time* magazine was compelled to apologize for the cover photograph that transformed Simpson into a thug, and A. M. Rosenthal, the *New York Times* columnist accustomed to the company of statesmen, found himself in print, "Are we journalists garbage collectors?"

The question was as superfluous as most of the criticism directed against the electronic media over the last thirty years, but on reading through the whole catalogue of sermons, I was reminded of some of my own irrelevant pronouncements about the idiocy of network television, and I all too easily could recognize the attempt to reassert the authority of the word, to defend the construct of laws, cause and effect, straight lines and a political discourse made of something other than the Nielsen ratings. The voices of the anchorpersons and the newspaper columnists were the voices of an *ancien régime* as irretrievably doomed as Marie Antoinette. Even as they declared their faith in syllogisms and won arguments whether a celebrity of Simpson's

dle could be sentenced to death, chorus of bystanders outside the Angeles County Jail was holding up saying [illegible], WE LOVE ...d. The house in Brentwood had ome a tourist attraction, the net-ks were interrupting their daytime -opera schedules with reports from fornia trial lawyers, and Simpson's t presumably was talking book deals every publisher in New York.

he pious expressions of Christian n mistook the pagan terms of en-ment under which the news media ow the gift of immortal celebrity. The ain is a Faustian one that demands ffering of blood sacrifices on the al-f publicity. In return for the favors of th and applause, the celebrity pre-s the carcass of his or her humanity e rituals of the public feast. What was a subject becomes an object—a orate logo or a T-shirt, a lump of wax ble to the souvenir molds of prime-docudrama, a brand name awak-g with its "personal touch" the spirit nart in a basketball sneaker or a bot-f perfume, a trace element of the d soul, a delicacy served to an audi-accustomed to consuming its heroes demigods as if they were cheese-ers or sun-dried tomatoes.

milar terms of endearment were known to the very ancient Greeks, allowed their sacred kings to rule hebes or Lycia for a single tri-hant year before putting them to h in order that their blood might ify the crops and fields. Enumer-g the several forms of the custom-acrifice in *The Greek Myths*, Robert es could have been summarizing headlines in *The National Enquirer* he promotional tag lines for *Hard* : "His ritual death varied greatly in mstance; he might be torn to pieces ild women, transfixed with a sting-bear, felled with an axe, pricked in heel with a poisoned arrow, flung a cliff, burned to death on a pyre, ned in a pool, or killed in a pre-ar-ed chariot crash. But die he must." s McLuhan noticed thirty years the technologies of the electronic e carry us backward into the fire-flickering in the caves of a Ne-ic past. The habits of mind derived our use of the mass media—"we me what we behold . . . we shape ols and afterwards our tools shape

us" deconstruct the text [illegible] lization founded on the premise of the printed page. To the extent that we revise the visual order of print, we substitute for the idea of the townsman or the citizen the sensibilities characteristic of preliterate peoples. If all the world can be seen simultaneously, and if all mankind's joy and suffering is always and everywhere present (on CNN or with Sally Jessy Raphael, on the Sunday Night Movie or MTV), nothing necessarily follows from anything else. Sequence becomes merely additive in

[illegible] would they require an explanation of O. J. Simpson's appearance in the sacred [illegible] thing. Is that anybody's notion? Under the rule of images and the [illegible] ritual becomes clumsy, applied knowledge, and the presence of celebrity signifies nothing other than itself. ■



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HARPER'S INDEX

Chances that an American child living with both parents will repeat a grade in school : 1 in 9
Chances that a child living with an unwed mother and no father will repeat a grade : 1 in 3
Number of black grade-school children, per 100,000, who are regularly left home alone : 1,408
Number of white grade-school children, per 100,000, who are : 4,166
Percentage of sexually active teenagers who say they usually have sex in their own or their partner's home : 72
Maximum sentence, in paddle strokes, proposed for underage vandals in a bill before the California legislature : 10
rcentage change, since 1992, in civil-rights violations by U.S. colleges, according to the Department of Education : +82
Amount the Department of Education will spend this year on a "high-security" phone system : $7,264
atio of Internet posts to "alt.fan.oj-simpson.drive.faster" to posts to "alt.fan.oj-simpson.die.die.die" last June 20–21 : 3:1
Days after Nicole Simpson was murdered that her home was included on L.A.'s Grave Line celebrity-death tour : 6
Chances that an execution performed at a U.S. prison will not succeed on the first try : 1 in 13
Ratio of the number of prisoners awaiting trial in the United States to the number in Russia : 1:1
Number of European governments suspected of torturing prisoners last year, according to Amnesty International : 9
Percentage of the U.N.'s global peacekeeping force that comes from the United States : 1
Percentage of the World Bank's employees who work in Washington, D.C. : 95
Number of Mexico's four largest exporters that are owned by U.S. companies : 3
Estimated number of labor disputes in China last year, according to the Chinese government : 12,358
Maximum number of people who may congregate publicly in Singapore without police permission : 5
Percentage of Vietnamese who believe it is possible to recognize a person with HIV or AIDS on sight : 54
Number of U.S. cities in which AIDS is the leading cause of death among adults between the ages of 25 and 44 : 64
Chances that an American under the age of 15 is not covered by health insurance : 1 in 6
Average cost of raising a child, through college, according to *Town and Country* magazine : $816,303
Number of years it would take an average working American to earn this amount : 31
ot-machine revenue earned last year by the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe's casino in Connecticut, per Pequot : $267,300.97
Ratio of the size of Ted Turner's land holdings in the West to the size of Grand Teton National Park : 5:2
Cost of developing and growing the grass playing field used for the World Cup at Michigan's Silverdome : $2,400,000
Projection of its life span, in days : 50
Number of major league baseball players since 1876 who hit a home run the first time at bat : 69
Number of the 55 no longer playing who never hit another : 11
Average income tax levied by the city of Philadelphia this year on each visiting major league player, per game : $231
mount for which a Pennsylvania woman is suing the state's lottery commission because she has never won : $1,500,000
Ratio of the average libel award won in a U.S. court since 1990 to the average amount paid after appeal : 20:1
Chances that a black federal judge appointed since 1977 was appointed by Bill Clinton : 3 in 4
mber of Civil War battlefields within a 50-mile radius of the proposed site of Disney's America historical theme park : 50
Amount Wayne Newton spent last year refurbishing his pet penguins' pond on his Nevada ranch : $75,000
Pounds of butter used by the Iowa State Fair last month to create a life-sized statue of Garth Brooks : 250
Price of a 4 1/2-pound-steak dinner at Amarillo's Big Texan Steak Ranch, if consumed within an hour : $0
Number of the 22,000 customers attempting this since 1960 who were successful : 4,200
imber of paramedics on duty last fall for the speed-eating contest at the Artichoke Festival in Castroville, California : 2
Number of contestants who have ever required the Heimlich maneuver : 1

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READINGS

[Speech]

STRANGERS IN A SMALL WORLD

From "The Stranger at the Door," a talk given by Pico Iyer this summer at the Institute of World Culture, in Santa Barbara, California. Iyer is the author, most recently, of Falling Off the Map, *published by Vintage; his first novel, set in contemporary Cuba, will be published next spring by Knopf.*

The global village is one of those ideas to which almost everyone can give assent: it rhymes with all the notions with which we buoy and congratulate ourselves—the family of man, the brotherhood of souls, the replacement of walls with bridges. The global village tells us, in powerful, palpable ways, that we're all one race under the skin and that, beneath all the superficial differences of custom and fashion and tongue, the fears and fantasies of that villager in, say, Mali are not so different from our own: he, too, after all, is moved by Michael Jackson rhythms and transfixed by *Dallas* archetypes. Small wonder companies try to concoct slogans like the United Colors of Benetton: one touch of nurture makes the whole world kin.

We accept, of course, that with proximity come problems, and problems for which the old world order scarcely prepared us; that, in the absence of external divisions, we are obliged to create and consolidate our own new and artificial ones; that more and more countries, in this time of mass migration, may seem as factionalized as Lebanon; and that now, when any country sneezes (to extend the age-old axiom), the whole world catches a cold. Yet, at bottom, we are still ready to applaud the virtues of this new multiculturalism and its resuscitation of all our *e pluribus unum* hopes. We know that we are enriched and educated by having Thai children in the classroom and Salvadoran refugees down the street; that choices—the great luxury of a diverse consumer society—can now multiply. We know too that the globe is our oyster in ways that before only the rich could enjoy; we can fly around the world, and the world can fly around us.

Yet it is precisely the blessings of this order—evident and indisputable as they are—that can blind us to its dangers, and they are dangers for which we are as unguarded as children in first love: we have no precedents to stay us or to guide us. When a stranger comes knocking on our door, we have no sense of his needs and expectations. If he is a smiling and exotic stranger, we may be doubly disarmed. And the very charms that his foreignness confers may lead us into places where we are soon quite lost.

The dangers of the global village begin, not surprisingly, with the problems of mobility: to put it simply, our vices are now global. Italians go to Prague and Havana to get cheap dates, and Germans can hop on a plane to Stockholm to find underage sex partners. Nigerians regularly get caught in Bangkok Airport with heroin in their stomachs, and the "economic miracle" in Japan is often, in small ways, subverted by the tens of thousands of immigrants from Iran and Israel who set up their own stalls and deals on the streets of Tokyo. Prostitution, to take one specific example, now takes unprecedented forms: Ghanaian girls in Antwerp, Russians throughout the Middle East, Dominicans in Spain. The metaphor of these freely moving bodies has gained an almost concrete meaning in the age of AIDS;

scandal was, in part, a reflection of what can happen when a charming stranger arrives at the door and we do not know what to make of him. The Bank of America, remember, acquired a 25 percent share of BCCI in 1972, and the Bank of England gave BCCI a license. Both, in their way, were simply unprepared to deal with an entity whose codes they could not read.

Technology has, to be sure, eliminated some of our old divisions and corruptions; but it has also given us new ways of refining and compounding them. Even as many countries are now proudly marching down the Information Highway, many others (think of North Korea, Iraq, Myanmar) are better able than ever to bind their people to the Disinformation Highway. And while Salman Rushdie, the apostle of a new internationalism, sings the possibilities of a fresh, cross-pollinating world, he is stalked by an old ancestral order that embodies an almost medieval sense of self-enclosedness—and that prosecutes its *fatwa* in Tokyo and Istanbul and Bradford, England. We may say that the age-old pattern of migration from countryside to city is now global—that the bright student from rural India can now set his sights not on Bombay but on Cambridge, Massachusetts. But we must also add that the divisions that haunt many a big city are now global, so that much of the world resembles one big city, with South-Central on one side and Bel-Air on the other.

Deeper than the problems of sudden connectedness, however, are the fundamental disconnections that the new globalism obscures. As Edward Said has pointed out, the exile's predicament is made more agonized these days by the fact that he can see what he has left behind. He is surrounded by reminders of his home and reinforcements of his seeming closeness to it. The Cambodian in California can see Phnom Penh on his TV, and see the streets where he courted his wife, and watch his old neighbors setting up their shops again, and the ones who murdered his father saying "cheese" before the cameras; he can even—and this is the ultimate tease—get on a plane and be back there tomorrow. But if he makes the trip, he will likely find that Phnom Penh is no closer to Long Beach than it ever was, and that he is as much a foreigner there as in the new home he has gained.

That is one of the great shadows of the illusory smallness our new world offers. We are often told—and it *is* heartening—that on the West Bank, Palestinians and Israelis both watch *L.A. Law* on Sunday nights, on screens that have subtitles in both Arabic and Hebrew. We read that the Khmer Rouge are tuning in to *Santa Barbara*, and we feel that this establishes their humanity, or at least a common link between us. But what they are

HOBOKEN: PARTY TOWN, USA

From a description of a twenty-minute videotape of

The video was shot in April by police in support of a proposed ordinance prohibiting local bars from admitting patrons after 1:00 A.M. The videotape was

the viewing was canceled after Ronald Gastelu, the owner of Bahama Mama's, a Hoboken bar, tackled the projector as the videotape was beginning. Although the ordinance was approved, local bar owners successfully sued to have it struck down until they could make their case to the council. At a second meeting, in June, the video was shown; Mayor Anthony Russo said it depicted "a typical weekend in the city of Hoboken." The description below accompanied an article by Caren Lissner in the June 5 Hoboken Reporter.

A man is leaning against the wall of a bar, drinking. Next to him, a friend is undressing.

A man is caught changing his clothes in a parking garage. He is wearing only his briefs.

A young man and woman lean against a fence and begin kissing passionately. Another woman taps the man on the shoulder. He leaves and she

An intoxicated young man stumbles into a

street alone and he keeps walking.

A drunken man is found lying on the pave-

A woman leans on her boyfriend and vomits.

A woman urinates beside a parked car as her

They profess their love for each other and

an walk down an alley to-

patterns. Eventually they walk in-



and Chicken, Northern California, 1993," by Jock Sturges, from Radiant Identities, *a collection of Sturges graphs to be published in November by Aperture. Sturges lives in San Francisco.*

learning about us from *Santa Barbara* is doubtless as limited as what we learn about them from the (already Western-filtered) movie *The Killing Fields*. And when a Cambodian comes to America eager to deal with Robin Wright, he will be as lost as one of us who goes to Phnom Penh with images of Dith Pran in our heads. Vietnam was famously the "living-room war." But now every war is in our living room, and in half the living rooms of the world. Rodney King is being beaten up in Johannesburg, and Bosnia is in Miami every night. But the knowledge we get from this is no deeper than the image, and the fact that we believe we have seen the "real Cambodia" on our screens may well put us behind our grandfathers, who could scarcely countenance such illusions.

Thus a man in Louisiana says "Freeze!" and a Japanese boy, looking for a Halloween party, doesn't get it—and a life is lost, and trust undermined. The problem is not one of complete misunderstanding but rather—and more dangerously—of a partial understanding, or the illusion of understanding. People may play contract bridge across several countries on the Internet, but they cannot communicate bluffs or poker faces on their computer screens; faxes transmit words instantaneously, but they are not so good with nuances or pauses.

Homogeneity, in fact, is not the fear: every culture sings Madonna with a different accent. It is disguised heterogeneity that is the threat, a world of differences that is veiled by surface similarities. And a world of differences made more difficult when everyone's living down the block. It is not just that the Afghan down the street has different customs from ours; even when he watches *Rambo III*, he is getting something very different from the screen than we are—is seeing it as a political piece and not an entertainment. For him McDonald's may be a status symbol, as surely as that quaint Central Asian restaurant is for us. And the very diversity of costumes and colors that seems so beguiling in the Opening Ceremonies of the Olympic Games becomes more charged when it's to be found in the divisions and rivalries within Timmy's classroom.

None of this, of course, is an argument for hardening our differences, or for living alone, or for denying the richness and opportunities that polyculturalism makes available. A little knowl-

Michael Ondaatje's beautiful novel *The English Patient*, he presents a lyrical, often radical [illegible] nationalities, in which people are simply individuals, of indistinguishable origins, with a hundred different cultures singing inside them. That is a lovely and a liberating notion, and it is one echoed by those executives who tell us that soon there will be "no Japan, only Japanese." But it underestimates, perhaps, a need, a basic human need, for affiliation with something larger and a sense of belonging to a higher order. For Ondaatje, the desert is the model of a place where all distinctions are dissolved and people live as people; but as the fourteenth-century Arab writer Ibn Khaldun wrote, "Only tribes held together by group feeling can live in a desert."

If there is a real virtue to all the blessings of the global village, it inheres mostly in our recognition of how much our sense of obligation must be expanded and diversified, and how much our family responsibilities, if you will, must be extended more than they have ever been before. Insofar as we aspire to be our brothers' keepers, we have to acknowledge that we have five—soon eight—billion brothers, and that they are in Borneo and Bolivia and Benin. Insofar as we try to love our neighbors as ourselves, we have to admit that our neighbors are people with whom we share no common language, or past, or value. And the smaller the distance between people, Freud reminded us, the greater, often, the dispute.

FORTIES NOSTALGIA HITS [illegible]



[illegible] the governing party in Japan from 1955 until [illegible]

[illegible] reelection." After [illegible]

[Report]

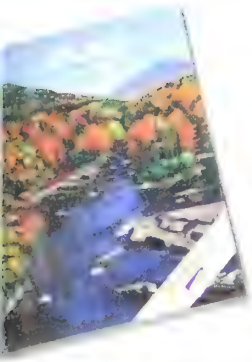
TURNING A BLIND EYE TO SPIES

From "Monitoring the Continuing Reliability of the Cleared Personnel," a report prepared by Project Slammer, an initiative by the various U.S. intelligence agencies, in which Americans convicted of espionage are interviewed about their crime. The report is based on classified interviews in which spies "discuss clues that co-workers and supervisors could have noticed to halt or prevent the espionage." A copy of the report was leaked earlier this year by a former counter-intelligence official who felt its lessons were being ignored by the CIA and other agencies; it was given to Jeff Stein, author of A Murder in Wartime: The Untold Spy Story That Changed the Course of the Vietnam War.

What co-workers might have seen:

Subjects' comments varied widely on this topic. Several claimed that while they were experiencing extremes of stress, depression, and dissatisfaction, which may have impacted adverse-

L.L.Discoveries



.L.Change of Season



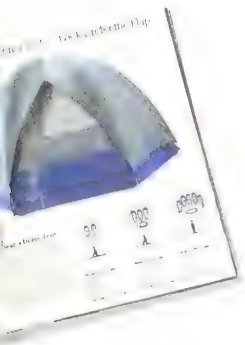
L.L.Places to Go



L.L.On the Road



L.L.Down East



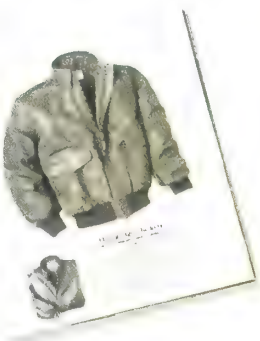
L.L.Outdoors



L.L.Indoors



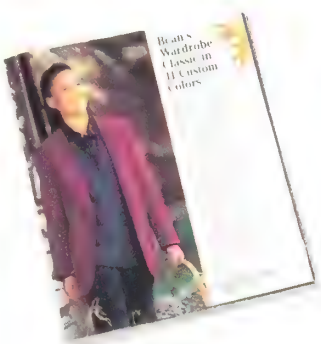
L.L.After School



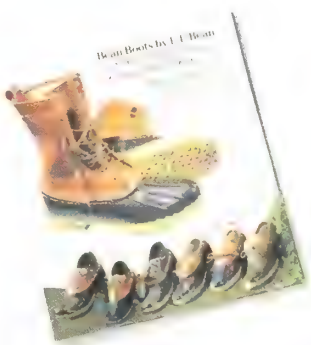
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he (in a state of intoxication) told another staff member, "I have problems, I hurt. I don't want to be here, and I don't know if I'm going to hurt myself or not." To his supervisor, he claims to have said, "I don't want to be in this job anymore. You need to take my clearance." This is, admittedly, an extreme example, but it provides examples of what some of the indicators can be.

How did subjects' estimates of the risk of being reported by co-workers affect their decision to commit espionage?

Reactions to this type of question were fairly uniform. Most offenders discounted co-worker intervention as a realistic deterrent; anxiety about being observed and reported had little to do with their decision to go ahead with the crime.

Carney states that his working associates "just couldn't believe that the possibility existed that maybe I was doing something that I was not authorized to do. [It] never came into question. And after a while you get used to that and you know that it's not a threat anymore."

The experience related by Carney demonstrates that when many people observe anything out of the ordinary, espionage is often the last thing they suspect.

"One evening when I came very close to getting caught was probably one of the most labor-intensive nights that I had as a spy. It was an evening where I was set to photograph a few hundred pages with a camera. It was the first time I'd used the camera. I took a huge document and another huge document with me, went across the hall into an unsecured room, laid the documents out on the table, secured everything, had my camera ready, and started photographing just behind a small divider. I was walked in on two times while I was photographing. And I was able to just stand there. I was standing behind a table, my face went red as a beet because my blood pressure was unbelievable, and the people went, 'Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you were busy.' And they turned around and walked out. I thought, 'It's ridiculous. They should have caught me.' They didn't question what I was doing."

Carney offers another insightful comment on this subject: "After I began gathering information for the East Germans, I became very interested in everything. And that means everything except my real job, although I was still doing my job. I suddenly had an interest in all the other systems. I was ostensibly trying to further my education and get the big picture. I was putting my nose in the books where I didn't belong. I was looking in areas where I shouldn't have been. I was talking to people, gathering information from conversations. It was actually

with superiors, sexual harassment, and sexually

MATH FOR THE BITTER

book by Kevin J. Mistrik and Robert C. Thiel, who teach at Catholic high schools in Chicago. The workbook, published by the Mathematics Teachers' As-

situations of injustice that need mathematics in order to be fully understood," including "Hunger and Poverty in the U.S.A.," "Cholera Is a Killer," and "Fair Wages," which is excerpted below.

I

made approximately $7,000,000. He played 158 games. An average Catholic-high-school teacher makes approximately $30,000 per year working eight hours a day over a 180-day school year.

1. Calculate how much that teacher gets paid per day, and compare that with what Ryne Sandberg was paid per game in 1992.

2. Assuming that a ballplayer's workday is six hours, compare the average teacher's pay per hour with that of Mr. Sandberg.

3. How many years would it take a teacher to make as much money as Ryne did?

more than a teacher? When answering this ques-

each person contributes to society. [h]



ld With Barr Simpson Doll, Cite Soleil, Haiti.' by Les Stone. This photograph was on display this summer at ery Lavanto, in New York City, as part of a group show on Haiti sponsored by the North American Congress on atin America. Stone's previous work has documented conflicts in Panama, Colombia, Somalia, and the former t Union.

very obvious, I felt. Somebody should have noticed.

"If people had sat down with me, even a year before all of this happened, and said, 'I've been watching you and I think we need to talk about this or that,' and done it in a way that was nonthreatening—it wasn't automatically linked together with losing your job, a stigma attached—I probably would have said, 'Gee, thanks, I'm glad you're going to listen to me, because I've got a lot on my mind.' But nobody cared. If somebody had just sat down once and said, 'Really, I care about you as a human being,' that would have made all the difference in the world."

Arthur Walker [a retired Navy lieutenant commander convicted in 1985 of passing classified documents to a Soviet spy ring], when asked whether this lack of co-worker concern in reporting suspicious activity had any effect on his behavior, concluded, "As far as feeling threatened or somebody detecting what I was attempting to do, I don't think I even thought of that really. You know, as far as my outward appearance, attitude, and behavior, I don't [think] it ever entered my mind." In comparison to Carney, Walker was very careful about his methods. He minimized the chance of being observed. He removed selected pages from large loose-leaf binders, photocopied them in his van, and then returned these pages to the original document before the end of the day. Walker also opines, "I think a lot of people just tend to mind their own business. They don't really want to ask somebody if they have a problem. . . . And I think that's what most people would think: 'Let the manager take care of it, let the boss take care of this.'"

In summary, these espionage offenders did not attribute much credibility to the threat to their nefarious activities posed by co-workers or supervisors. They suggested a number of reasons why other employees would neither recognize that there was something amiss nor, even when they did suspect some impropriety or vulnerability, take corrective action. Two sentiments mentioned prominently are 1) an overriding trust in co-workers presumably because of their cleared status and 2) an inherent resistance to telling on someone else. Added to this is perhaps a third inhibiting attitude—which can be described as a lack of trust in the organization and how it will handle security-relevant information. These anxieties create a range of possible organizational responses, from indifference or suppression to overreaction and a violation of confidentiality.



Michele has been one of our safety engineers for eight years now. Even before there was a Saturn car, there were Saturn people like her. Designing. Testing. Thinking. Then testing some more.

That's the way you dream up things like, oh, patent # 4,893,874 —the latchplate on our rear seatbelts that Michele helped design. Or even a little bigger project she happened to be part of—the dual airbags on the new Saturn.

Michele and her team wanted not only an additional airbag but additional advances. A centralized sensing system for knowing exactly when to deploy the bags. And a new contour—on an all-new dash—to hold the passenger bag in position.

While the rest of us expect to be fam… engineer Michele Smith is o…

She doesn't always get the credit for making a Saturn safe, but Michele isn't complaining. She knows Saturn



Every Saturn features [illegible] shoulder harnesses, available anti-lock brakes, and now, dual airbags like the ones shown here. But don't be fooled by looks. Airbags aren't fluffy pillows.

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WHY JOHNNY CAN'T MOUSSE

Johnson Company, and Revlon, the cosmetics compa-

teachers. Revlon has recently marketed a line of hair-
care products "formulated especially for the younger

The activities below will help your students
what to do about it. It's a lively and entertain-
ing program that will involve your entire class,
because hair is so important to a teen's self-

Use these suggestions to help engage students in learning about good hair care and styling. Encourage them to share their knowledge with others and to have fun experimenting with different styles and ideas.

Good Hair/Bad Hair Days—Ask students to bring in pictures of themselves from days they consider "good" and "bad" hair days. Mount the pictures on a bulletin board and have students describe what a good or bad hair day means to

—Have students team up in twos and give them a few days to develop new hairstyles for each other. Give each pair an objective: plan a look suitable for a job interview, design a look for the prom, and so on. Ask for volunteers to show off their look and explain how they achieved it. Discuss which looks really work and which need work.

Your Locks Can Talk—Help your students find the message that hair can send. Have each student bring in a picture from a magazine or newspaper and ask the class to guess information about the people in the pictures based on their hair. Then reveal the identities of the people in the pictures and discuss whether their hairstyles suit their ages, personalities, and professions. Have students offer hairstyle suggestions to improve the subjects' credibility, authority, and effectiveness.

Hair Necessities—Students who have developed a successful hair regimen will swear there are products they can't live without. Start a discussion by asking the following question: "If you were stranded on a desert island with fresh water to wash your hair, which three hair-care products would you *have* to have, and why?"



[Essay]

THE IVORY TOWER OBSCURITY FETISH

From "Journalists, Cynics and Cheerleaders," by Russell Jacoby, in Telos, *number 97, a journal published in New York City. Jacoby is the author, most recently, of* Dogmatic Wisdom: How the Culture Wars Divert Education and Distract America, *published by Doubleday.*

Recent strife on college campuses has been portrayed as "tenured radicals" trying to undermine the oppressive institutions that employ them. But the opposite argument is more convincing: to a startling degree, American professors on the left have come to embrace their professional roles. They encounter the world not as radical subversives but as secure employees of mainstream institutions.

Unlike past American intellectuals, who saw the educated, nonacademic public as their main audience, today's leftist intellectuals feel no need to write for a larger public; colleagues, departments, and professional conferences have come to constitute their world. And as their desire to reach a nonprofessional public has atrophied,



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journalists and critics as backward outsiders.

Disdain for a public prose should stick in the [illegible] the left. It doesn't. It goes down smoothly, facilitated by a widely accepted proposition: clear language undermines critical thought. Although the position can easily be ridiculed, it rests on some undeniable truths. Language is more than an empty vessel; not every argument can be made accessible to a general audience. Certain insights, information, and subjects require a specialized vocabulary. Humanities professors draw direct parallels between their studies and those in the physical and biological sciences; their research is just as specialized and complex, and needs as much training to grasp. Judith Frank, a feminist professor, complains that a journalist critic "seems to expect the humanities to be utterly transparent to the general population, when the truth is that for those of us who have gone through graduate training, the humanities are a profession, and the people who practice a particular profession are trained in its language." This might be called pulling rank, showing the unaccredited to the door.

Fredric Jameson, one of the deans of Marxist cultural criticism, offers a similar justification: literary and cultural theory is as complex as molecular biology. It is "surprising" how many people take a "belletristic view," Jameson comments, making "the assumption, which they would never make in the area of nuclear physics, linguistics, symbolic logic, or urbanism, that such [cultural] problems can still be laid out with all the leisurely elegance of a coffee-table magazine."

In the exact sciences the need for specialized language seems incontestable; papers by biomathematicians need to use a vocabulary that limits a general readership. Yet transferring the point to the humanities and social sciences is dicey. Literature, history, and philosophy belong to the common stock of humanity; their importance resides partly in their accessibility to an educated reader. Thoughtful citizens can acquaint themselves with Western philosophy and literature from Plato to William James or from Sophocles to Kafka. The humanities as a whole resist becoming a technical discipline with a technical audience. But many scholars in the field challenge this idea; it suggests to them that their work is inferior to scientific research because it is less complex and more accessible.

Academics on the left use another argument to justify their vocabulary. Not only do specialized fields require a specialized idiom but society, especially Anglo-American society, employs simple language in order to resist subversive truths. A "clear" sentence structure represses critical thinking that requires a counter-logic and vocabulary. Again, this belief can be easily ridiculed, but

UNGER V. MADISON

[illegible] Iula's first semester as a freshman, defendant Al- [illegible] plaintiff questionnaire requesting information re- [illegible] selecting for plaintiff a roommate whose lifestyle [illegible]

2. Plaintiff returned the questionnaire, clearly indicating his preference for and compatibility with a quiet and studious roommate who would not stay up all hours of the night.

3. Albright College ignored plaintiff's answers to the questionnaire and housed plaintiff with a Matthew Grimes, a football player, who did not study, who regularly engaged in loud and raucous behavior, who kept late hours, and who kept loud [illegible]

4. From the time of plaintiff's arrival on campus in August 1992 until his untimely departure in October 1992, plaintiff was, in his very dormitory room, bullied, threatened, assaulted, and subjected to acts of vandalism and humiliating treatment by his roommate Grimes, Grimes's friends, and off-campus trespassers.

5. Plaintiff sought help from school authorities, including the resident adviser, the resident direc- [illegible]



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mounting common truisms and familiar categories; they necessitate an uncommon language, or what Hegel once half-apologetically called an "obscure style."

American poststructuralist, post-Marxist, and post-everything thinkers appeal to these ideas in justifying their language. Not only are we highly trained specialists, using a complex prose, they say; we are also dedicated subversives, using an idiom that resists a repressive clarity. Fredric Jameson, defending the German critical Marxists from charges of obscurity, argues that "it can be admitted that [their writing] does not conform to the canons of clear and fluid journalistic writing taught in schools. But what if those ideas of clarity and simplicity have come to serve a very different ideological purpose . . . ?" What if transparency facilitates clichés and avoids "real thought" that requires effort and time? For Jameson the density of T. W. Adorno's writing exemplified a break with repressive clarity. His "bristling mass of abstractions and cross-references is precisely intended to be read in situation, against the cheap facility of what surrounds it, as a warning to the reader of the price he has to pay for genuine thinking."

The point is well taken; it is also misleading. The issue is not the difficulty of writing but the fetishizing of difficulty, the belief that fractured English, name dropping, and abstractions guarantee profundity, professionalization, and subversion. With this belief comes the counter-belief: lucidity implies banality, amateurism, capitalism, and conservatism.

Everywhere a denunciation of repressive clarity leads to an embrace of obscurity in the name of revolutionary profundity. In a book on postmodern education, two professors condemn clarity and defend complex or "bad" writing. "It seems to us that those who call themselves progressive educators, whether feminists, Marxists or otherwise . . . have missed the role that the 'language of clarity' plays in a dominant culture that cleverly and powerfully uses 'clear' and 'simplistic' language to systematically undermine and prevent . . . complex and critical thinking."

Richard Wolff, a Marxist economics professor, offers a more ringing defense of "bad" writing. Poststructuralist and postmodernist writing is "difficult to read" because "major shifts in ways of thinking usually interact complexly with related shifts in ways of speaking and writing. Early in the process, the new ways of writing will often be convoluted and opaque." Not only is opaque language required for complex thinking but a brainwashed American public prizes clarity; as long as the public does not wake up, we post-Marxists will appear to be "bad" writers. What this public rejects as incomprehensible proves its value, believes Professor Wolff. "To uphold radical and

SAY HELLO TO THE CLASS OF 1998

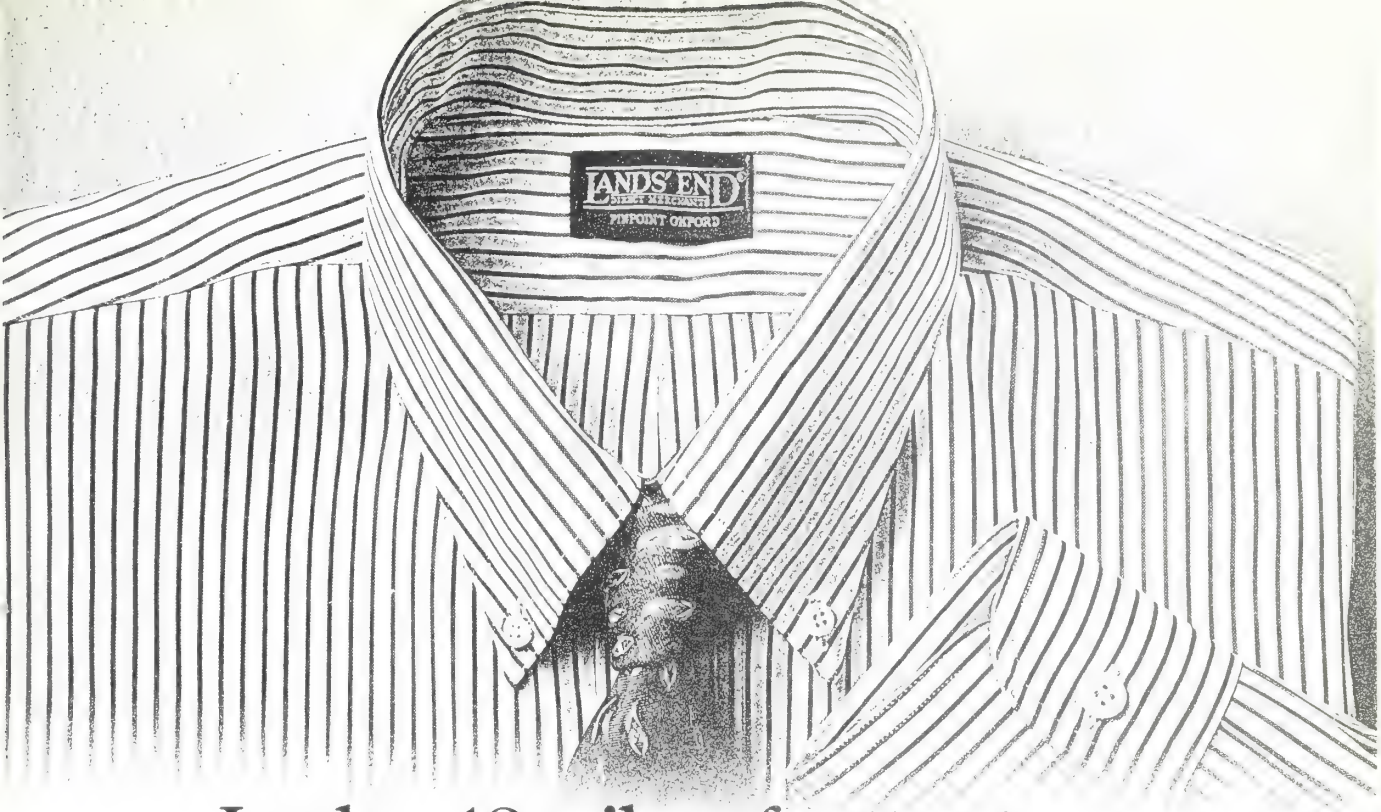
From a guide sent by Columbia University alumni associations to alumni who interview applicants to [illegible]. The guide asks the interviewer to record his or her impressions of the applicant and provides examples from past alumni interview reports as a model. Each sample report is followed by a critique from the Columbia admissions office. Most freshmen entering Columbia have a combined SAT score of between 1250 and 1450; the student described below scored 950. He was admitted to the university.

Tom's interests and accomplishments are in sports, and he exhibited little intellectual curiosity or ambition during the interview. He is not much of a reader and is generally not very verbal. While he is reasonably articulate once you get him started on something in which he is interested (like football), he is not much of a conversationalist.

He is very pleasant and polite, and I'd like to give him a better evaluation. However, he seems [illegible] football field. He really didn't present himself very well, and I have real questions about whether he would survive academically or be happy at Columbia. He said he is interested in business (accounting, perhaps), but I don't think he really

I almost checked "not recommended," but *if* he's a real good football player and has done well scholastically and on the Boards, he may be a soft-spoken hard worker who's never had an interview before, and worth a chance.

Admissions Office Critique: The write-up brings the boy to life for me. I get a clear impression of what



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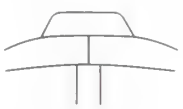
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[redacted]

ery day of their lives. The sad truth, however, is [redacted] with us for only a few years before death takes them away and we are left helpless and heart-[redacted]

[redacted] ples from pet animals in cryogenic cylinders; this freezing keeps the blood alive indefinitely. Once technology reaches the point where DNA from blood cells can be used to replicate high-level animals, your pet's blood can go through the same process, enabling you to raise an animal that is identical in every way to your current or previous pet.

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A: This is a decision only you can make. It [redacted]

Marxist ideas and to develop them in new directions would quite predictably produce writings out of tune with the prevalent presumptions and desires of the postwar public: 'bad' writings in the eyes of many."

As with so much radical scholarship, leftists break with the very theories they appeal to. The easy or ostentatious references to seditious thought from Marx to Nietzsche and Freud ignore the fact that these masters often—not always—were wonderful writers, and ruthless critics of pedantry and obscurantism. The original rebels did not obsessively salute their own complexity and scorn journalists and the educated public. If anything, they did the reverse: they scorned the pedants and addressed the public. The new academies invoke their names and ideas and surrender their prose and precision.

Marx knew something else forgotten by those who appeal to his writings: it is possible to write in different styles for different audiences. Works like *The Communist Manifesto*, *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, and *The Civil War in France* stand at the furthest remove from scholasticism. Even *Capital* is hardly a linguistic Death Valley; it contains many splendid passages. Marx quoted with pride reviews that praised its "clearness" and "unusual liveliness," and wrote, "In this respect the author in no way resembles . . . the majority of German scholars, who . . . write their books in a language so dry and obscure the heads of ordinary mortals are cracked by it."

Early in the century William James pondered the role of colleges and the college-educated. Colleges should have something to do with producing better individuals, cultivating a certain tone, and aiding democracy, he said. He feared colleges were failing on these scores, and he wondered if the popular and literary magazines of the day, the so-called ten-cent magazines, were taking up the slack. "It would be a pity," he wrote in 1908, "if any future historian were to have to write words like these: 'By the middle of the twentieth century the higher institutions of learning had lost all influence over public opinion in the United States. But the mission of raising the tone of democracy, which they had proved so lamentably unfitted to exert, was assumed with rare enthusiasm . . . by a new educational power . . . private literary adventures, commonly designated in the market by the affectionate name of ten-cent magazines.'" It would be wrong to dismiss the collective *oeuvre* of radical professors; through feminist studies, social history, Latin- and African-American departments, and revised canons, it percolates throughout higher education and society. On the other hand, one need not be a doomsayer to wonder about the quality of scholarly writing and the dearth of public writing.

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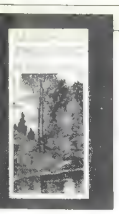
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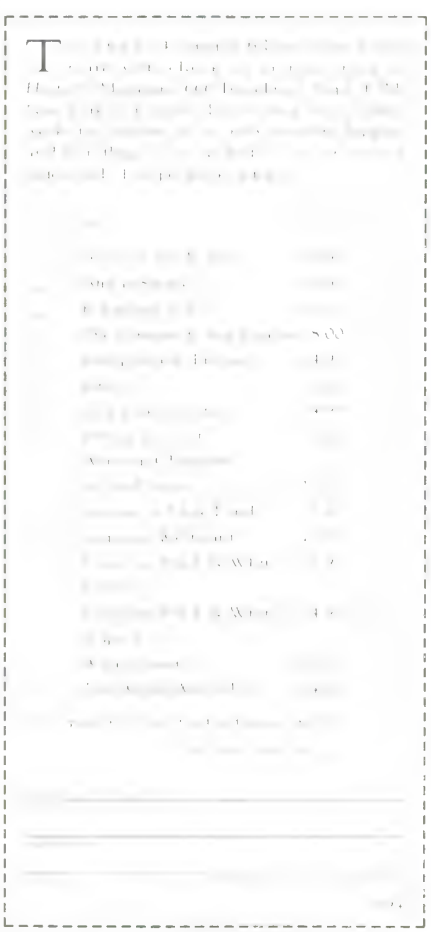
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GOOD-BYE, DOLLY





Photographs from the 1940s by Frances Glessner Lee, who helped establish the [illegible] Department of Legal Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Lee used miniatures to re-create actual murder scenes; her models were used in forensics [illegible] Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore, Maryland.

TORN BETWEEN TWO LOVERS

From a list of the attributes of two women that appeared on a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in front of her on an Air Reno flight. The author's identity is unknown; according to New Times, he wrote notes on the back of the spreadsheet that suggest "that he does computer work in Southern California." The women's names have been changed.

[illegible]

1. Terrible sex
2. Maybe not good mom
3. Potentially shaming to kids/me
4. Messy at times
5. Selfish
6. Not supportive
7. Vain
8. Inconsiderate
9. Perhaps too independent
10. Doesn't like home life
11. Chipping teeth
12. Cuts me down

BRENDA

Pros

1. More supportive
2. Beautiful
3. Great body
4. Great mom
5. Wealthy
6. Self-sufficient
7. Takes care of my needs
8. Exciting new relationship
9. She would love and support me
10. Beautiful eyes
11. Sexually excites me
12. Nice cars
13. Good sense of humor
14. [illegible]

Cons

1. Catholic
2. Strange mouth

3. Potential to get fat?
4. Syphilis in vagina
5. Must always use condom
6. She's married
7. Has child, perhaps I won't get the attention I need
8. Must go through divorce
9. Maybe doesn't like to travel?
10. Maybe doesn't appreciate nature?
11. Possibly pretentious?
12. Too yuppie-ish
13. Fair kisser
14. Hard boobs
15. No quest to improve place with God/self
16. Maybe not smart enough to challenge me
17. Maybe someday I get syphilis?

[Stylebook]

STRUNK DOES WHITE

From "Style Guide: Adult Titles," the copyediting stylebook in use at L.F.P., the Beverly Hills publishing company owned by Larry Flynt. The guide is the final authority on spelling, word usage, hyphenation, and capitalization for L.F.P.'s pornographic magazines, which include Hustler *and* Chic*; it was obtained by Randolph Heard, a former L.F.P. copy editor.*

aureola: Unless it has something to do with the sun or other round object, it's *areola*—the dark area around the nipple.
boobiferous: Slang for *busty*.
bump-and-grind (n. and adj.), *bump and grind* (v.)
cojones: Spanish for *balls*. Italicize.
deep-throat: Hyphenate in all usages except in reference to the classic porn film *Deep Throat*
der kleiner: Synonym for *penis*.
derriere: Do not use accent mark.
douchebag: Spell solid. Exception to Webster's.
flasher: Lowercase unless used as a fanciful appellation, as in *Fernwood Flasher*.
44s: Slang for *breasts*. Weapons would be *.44s*.
gang-bang (n. and v.), *gang-banger* (n.): Hyphenate in all sexual contexts; spell solid if referring to street-gang member.
Grafenberg spot: G *spot* is preferred.
hee-haws: Slang for *breasts*.
helluva: Use only when appropriate, such as in cartoon captions. *Hell of a* is preferred.
hilt, in to the: Ultimate penetration during sexual intercourse.
honeydews: Slang for large, well-shaped breasts.
jackoff (n. and adj.), *jack off* (v.)
Kama Sutra, the: The Indian love manual. Do not italicize.
K-Y Jelly
lovemaking: Noun only, the verb is *[illegible]*.
lubejob, lube job: The first involves sex; the second involves automobiles.
manchesters: Slang for *breasts*
maximum-freedom panties
obscenities: In nonsexual matter (excepting quotes), do not overuse four-letter words. Exercise caution when taking the Lord's name in vain (e.g., *Goddamn!*, *Jesus!*, *God!*).
orgasm: It's not a verb. Use *come*, *reach climax*, etc.
pasty (sing.), *pasties* (pl.)
Popsicle: Capitalize brand name. Lowercase when used as slang for *penis*.
porno (n. and adj.): For the most part, use only in direct quotes. *Porn* is the preferable term.
prossy (adj.): Relating to whores.
rearend: Spell solid in all usages. Exception to Webster's.
schwanz: Slang for *penis*.
shinola: Lowercase unless referring to trademarked product.
shot: Hyphenate in photographic contexts. No hyphen if referring to sports or inoculation: *beaver-shot*, *boob-shot*, *cum-shot*; but *slap shot*, *jump shot*, *penicillin shot*.
69: Use numerals unless it's the first word of a sentence. Also: *69ing*, *69d*.
swingers ads, swingers club: No apostrophe in either.
tochas: Yiddish for *buttocks*. Do not italicize.
Vaseline: A trademark for petroleum jelly.
virgin-lust: Generally, hyphenate temporary compounds of this nature because *virgin* can also be used as an adjective. If it is, omit hyphen, as in *virgin forest*.
well-hung: Hyphenate in all contexts.

[Listings]

MODERN ART: A BRIEF TOUR

From a list of descriptions of recent art exhibits at New York City galleries, culled from the listings section of New York *magazine by Tony Vanaria, a New Jersey writer. A list of Vanaria's selections appeared in the March issue of* Spy

Paintings executed over the last two years that are predominantly black
Large-format photographs that document the artist's three marriages and divorces and sculptural works that consist of two aluminum auto-rooftop moving containers from U-Haul and boxes and cylinders for packing.
Sculptures from the artist's "Vitro Vivo" series, in which human faces are formed from ceramic

An installation of a pile of logs from various kinds of trees, with text carved into them, executed between 1985 and 1993.

[illegible] including a portrait of Abraham Lincoln as a Georgian [illegible]

An installation of motorized dresses, tables, and [illegible]

New paintings that depict women in self-assured [illegible]

Black and white paintings on black velvet that look like television images and depict two people engaged in a private act.

An installation of tiny, handsewn men's clothing and related objects that confronts the viewer with associations of social displacement and shrunken self-image.

Pastel drawings that depict doughy figures in exchanges of sexual excess and violence, and dictionaries carved with an X-Acto knife into the shapes of topographical landscapes.

Works on the theme of dim sum, an informal Chinese meal, including an installation of paintings, blown glass, and family memorabilia.

A site-specific installation for which the artist has created a net of industrial rubber bands to cover the gallery's walls.

Clear plastic bags that contain and display trash collected by the artist on the streets of New York.

An installation that explores the meaning of the "reception desk."

THEY WRITE THE FAN MAIL

[illegible] tors published by the Barry Manilow International [illegible] branches in England, Japan, Germany, Australia, and South Africa

Hogwild Over Barry
Mile High for Manilow
The "B" Team
[illegible]
Barry's Friends Forever
Hot Tonight for Barry
[illegible]
Manilow Maniacs of Maryland
Manilow Magic
[illegible]
Brooklyn Bum Lovers
Very Barry Kentuckiana
A Streetcar Named Barry
Barry All the Time

[Story]

ISABELLE

By George Saunders. From the Spring issue of the Indiana Review, *a quarterly published by Indiana University. Saunders's story "The 400-Pound CEO" appeared in the February 1993 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

The first great act of love I ever witnessed was Split Lip bathing his handicapped daughter. We were young, ignorant of mercy, and called her Boneless or Balled-Up Gumby for the way her limbs were twisted and useless. She looked like a newborn colt, appendages folded in as she lay on the velour couch protected by guardrails. Leo and I stood outside the window on cinder blocks, watching. She was scared of the tub, so to bathe her Split Lip covered the couch with a tarp and caught the runoff in a bucket. Mrs. Split Lip was long gone, unable to bear the work Boneless required. She found another man, and together they made a little blonde beauty they dressed in red velvet and paraded up and down the aisle at St. Caspian's while Split Lip held Boneless against him in the last pew, shushing her whenever the music overcame her and she started making horrible moaning noises trying to sing along.

Maintaining Boneless cost plenty. Split Lip's main job was cop but on the side he sold water purifiers. When the neighborhood changed, the purifier business went belly-up. Split Lip said the niggers didn't care what kind of poison they put in their bodies. Truth was, the purifiers were a scam. Inside was a sponge and an electric motor connected to nothing. But without the purifier money he couldn't afford the masseuse who eased Boneless's bad pain and couldn't afford to have Mrs. Cavendish in. So before leaving for work he'd

put Boneless on the floor with a water bottle and her lunch and a picture book. Halfway through his shift he'd call home and she'd jerk the phone to the floor by the cord and make a certain sound that meant she was fine. In her simple way she understood poverty and never asked him to leave work, and time and again he came home to find her shivering on the floor in soiled pants.

By this time the panic sell was in full bloom. Old Poles and Czechs were losing their asses and leaving treasured flower gardens behind in a frenzy. Local industries failed left and right. The stockyard downscaled and Dad was reduced to pushing a gut cart for minimum. Even the nuns went racist after the convent was underappraised and it seemed their pension fund was in jeopardy.

The realtor came over and said ten thou. Dad sat looking at him.

"I pour my life's blood into this place, and you offer me half what I paid?"

"Don't blame me. Blame the spades."

Then it was spring, and flowers bloomed in the park.

Then it was summer, and the lagoon scummed over and race riots broke out and tear gas blew over the trees as Leo and I fished for carp.

One day in June, Split Lip came into the clearing leading a black teen by the ear. We squatted in the reeds. Officer Doyle nudged the teen's little brother with his billy club. We knew the little brother. He was Norris Crane. He played cornet with me in school, in Amazing Marching Falcons. He was an altar boy whose skin tore like paper. The nuns said that because of his affliction he didn't have to kneel through Stations, but he did anyway and offered it up to the Lord whenever he bled through his pants.

Officer Doyle said let's interrogate. Split Lip said I'll show you interrogation. He pushed the teen into the lagoon and held him under. With his club Doyle made Norris watch. The teen's hands slapped and slapped.

Then Split Lip stood up and the dead teen floated.

Now that's interrogation, Doyle said.

Split Lip said to Norris: Tell a soul and I'll take it out on your fat-butt mom in a heartbeat.

We ran home crying. Dad said shut our mouths about it forever. Ma said pray continually and try to forget. But who could forget? Every day on the way to school we saw Norris outside Spritzer's, becoming the world's youngest wino. Old lady Spritzer sold to anybody. She was a bitter crone with a thick mustache and big arm veins who'd lost two sons to the Koreans and one to an aging Rush Street queen who brought Kevin back by the neighborhood on weekends in a tremendous purple Lincoln. We'd see Norris puking into the sewer while talking nonsense about the blood of the Lamb and vowing in his high-pitched clubb voice [illegible] would have believed him. [illegible] was a sweetheart who in Biology had bitten [illegible] Dimps to give up his fetal pig. Every Halloween he came to school an Apostle and proudly placed his papier-mache staff in the aisle. Beneath her or no dead brother, his was a kind heart that would never allow him to do anyone harm.

Or so we thought. Then he came up with a gun. He showed it to us behind the dumpster on Halsted.

"I can't live with it anymore," he said. "I'll sneak in there this morning and wait all day for him to come home."

"You won't," Leo said.

[Monologue]

STANDING FIRM: THE EARLY YEARS

"On Snipe Hunting," by Michael Martone, from Pensées: The Thoughts of Dan Quayle, *a collection of stories inspired by the former vice president published by Broad Ripple Press, in Indianapolis*

They told me to wait, so I wait. They gave me a burlap sack and pushed me out of the car into the ditch next to a field. I watched the taillights disappear. They told me they would drive the snipes my way. "Wait here." And I do.

Stars are in the sky. I'm in a mint field. The branches of the low bushes brush against my legs, releasing the reeking smell.

I think, suddenly, they are not coming back. Back home, they are waiting for me to figure out that they are not coming back. They are thinking of this moment, the one happening now, when I think this thought, that they are not coming back, and then come home on my own.

But, I think, I'll wait. While waiting, I'll think of them waiting for me to return home with the empty burlap sack. They'll think that I haven't thought, yet, that I was left here in the mint field, that I am waiting for them to drive the snipes my way. I'll let them think that.

In the morning, I'll be here, waiting. They will come back looking for me. Dew will have collected on the mint bushes. The stars will be there but will be invisible. And I won't have thought that thought yet, the one they wanted me to think.

The imaginary quarry is still real and still being driven my way.

"My darling girl," he said. "We'll stay together forever and every day will be fun like this.

"Would you like that, my honey lamb?" Split

Norris stepped out of the closet, a frail kid in sneakers. He raised his gun and Boneless began

"Please, no," Split Lip said, "who will care for

Norris paused, thinking, then blew his own brains out across the yellow wall.

We ran. We ran to the train tracks and lay on our backs sick in our guts as the guiltless stars wheeled by. Norris's soul whizzed through the high grass. Chills broke out on my arms.

The Cranes moved back to Mississippi without a trace, reduced to a family of daughters.

Dad went almost blind and evenings I'd guide him home from the stockyards telling him what color the sky was. Then one night Ma came home from Trini's Market with a broken arm and no groceries. Dad said take one goddamned guess at the race of the guys who did this. Leo and I sat there in the kitchen with big eyes as Ma made fruit salad one-handed.

Sick with rage, Leo joined the Nazis. Dad wept and said nobody liked the jigs but it was no reason to go off the deep end. The next summer Leo cracked one in the head with a ball bat, and Dad said enlist quick before they throw your ass in the clink. Leo lied about his age and soon sent from Parris Island a postcard of a hick woman with missile breasts.

I'm so fucking lonely for you, man, he wrote, *join up soon as you can and we'll go over and kick some ass together.*

But Dad had pledged me to Split Lip. They were old school pals. Since the shooting, Boneless had been a mess. Unless someone was there all the time she wept nonstop. Dad said that someone was to be me. By now he was a crazy blind guy stinking up the parlor. How was I supposed to tell him no?

So every morning I biked over and made her eggs and Split Lip went off to work, biting his lip in gratitude and offering me unlimited rides in his squad car. I came to care about her. She tried so hard. I read to her and taught her to type using a stick held between her teeth. I brushed her hair until it shone and made sure her smocks were

Leo came home with a Baggie full of human ears and asked why was I wasting my life babysitting a tard. I said don't call her a tard. He said as long as I was being so pure, why not give her the real scoop on her old man? I said because it would crush her. Boo hoo, he said.

KITTY, BEFORE THE BREAKDOWN

were buried alive

thinking of that goddamn tank.

I forget any of the faces

stems and ponders



"Facache Treatment," by Carmen Lomas Garza. From A Piece of My Heart/Pedazo de mi Corazon, *a collection of Garza's paintings published by The New Press in New York City. In an introduction to the book, by Amalia Mesa-Bains, Garza's work is described as an "alternative chronicle" of Mexican-American culture and history. Garza grew up in Kingsville, Texas; she now lives in San Francisco.*

Finally Split Lip died in his sleep. Father Delacroix read aloud the eulogy Boneless wrote. People wept at the level of her devotion and her beautiful choice of words.

Leo sat next to me half-crocked, whispering: *murderer, murderer.*

With Split Lip dead, the maw of the state home gaped. There, invalids were frostbitten in their beds and lunatic women became pregnant without known lovers. Dad begged Ma to take Boneless in. But Ma said: Look at you, look at me, look at our son who's got no life, let her go where she can get proper care.

So in she went. Holidays we visited. At Thanksgiving, Leo came along wired on speed and while I was out fetching turkey slices from the Olds he told her all. I came back in and Ma was wringing her hands like a nut in the corner and Dad had Leo by the throat, asking where in the hell he'd left his sense of decency.

Leo pushed him off and said: Lies serve nothing. The truth serves God.

Dad said: God my foot, you buttinsky, you've broken her heart.

Thus was God served: a sobbing girl in a wheelchair, photographs of a dead man gathered up and burned, a typing stick used less often as the months went by, finally the cessation of all typing and a request that I visit no more.

Months passed. Nights I sat home, hearing gunshots and cackling addicts in the alley, waiting for any hopeful thing to sprout in my heart.

Finally I thought: what can she do, throw me out? So I went over. When she saw me her eyes lit up. She typed and I talked until the sun rose and the halls filled with oldsters and lunatics hacking and grousing their way into consciousness. Then an ex-con with a head scar brought her a dish of eggs that looked like it had spent the night on a windowsill, and I thought: Jesus Christ, enough is enough.

By then I was selling the hell out of Buicks at Petz's. So I got a little place of my own and moved her in. Now we're pals. Family. It's not perfect. Sometimes it's damn hard. But I look after her and she squeals with delight when I come home at night, and the sum total of sadness in the world is less than it would have been.

Her true name is Isabelle.

A pretty, pretty name. ■


A DAUGHTER
OBSESSED
WITH REVENGE.
A QUEEN
WHO MUST DIE
AT THE HANDS OF
HER CHILDREN.
THE METROPOLITAN
OPERA PRESENTS
ELEKTRA
Richard Strauss' early 20th century
masterpiece is an intense psychologi
portrait of a tormented woman obses
with avenging her father's murder
Hildegard Behrens
Deborah Voigt
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MONEYBALL!

On the relentless promotion of pro sports

By David Guterson

Last June, as the New York Rangers and the New York Knicks stood poised to win the Stanley Cup and the National Basketball Association championship, their owner, Viacom Inc., an $11 billion conglomerate, announced its unsentimental intention to sell the teams. The price for the Knicks, the experts predicted, might reach $200 million; for the Rangers, $100 million—and whatever pride Viacom might have taken in either team was as irrelevant to the deal as the muttering of hometown fans. Sport was business, not poetry, and any twelve- or sixty-year-old kid who thought otherwise had never bought a goalie or 100,000 gallons of beer.

At halftime of the seventh game of the NBA finals, which the Knicks lost to the Houston Rockets at Madison Square Garden, NBA commissioner David Stern told NBC sportscaster Bob Costas that the NBA's steering committee would ponder changing the placement of the three-point line in order to raise scores—and, by implication, TV ratings. The championship game itself flowed seamlessly into and out of commercials featuring products hawked by Shaquille O'Neal, Patrick Ewing, and Charles Barkley; ads for NBA-licensed videos of slam-dunking players; and promos for an odd, NBC-televised competition featuring Dream Team II, a squad composed of NBA stars. The unfolding of the game, it was clear to me, had become in-

David Guterson is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine. *His first novel,* Snow Falling on Cedars, *a novel published this month by Harcourt Brace & Company. His last article for* Harper's, *on the Mall of America, appeared in the August 1993 issue.*

is the front: the promotion of products, and I asked myself, while sta
the television, whether the game, its poetry and beauty, hadn't suff
deeply in the process. I wondered whether it was possibl
sport to be commodified and still resemble itself. Coul

Professional sport, it seems fair to say, is a primary expression of
American character at the end of the twentieth century. Like money, it is so
thing we love, a first waking thought and a chronic passion, as well as a
sector of the economy, a wellspring for contemporary myth and totem,
a media phenomenon of the highest order. Our sports can fend off the
facts of existence, temporarily arrest the sadness of life, briefly shroud th
evitability of death, and provide the happy illusion of meaning through l
enchanted afternoons. The elation of games can hold us spellbound unt
nally we are forced to accept their endings, and then we are spent and retu
to life, rendered hollow or exuberantly fulfilled, but always afterward cogn
of the real world, with its bits of peanut shell under our shoes and the
hint of rain to the west. In short, nothing about our national life is qui
national as sport is. Sport is a language we all speak. Sport is a mirror. S
is life. Through sport we might know ourselves.

But what is it that so commands our attention? On May 1 of this ye
pick a day at random—a sunlit Sunday in most parts of the country an
occasion in other times and places for dancing, flower gathering, or Soc
parades—millions of American men and women sat in thrall to the ga
displayed for long hours on their televisions. It was in no way an unusua
in the annals of televised sport: on ABC, a
tional Hockey League play-off game, followe
the Shell Houston Open golf tournament
NBC, *The NBA Show*, followed by three N
play-off games televised over the course of s
hours; the LPGA Sprint golf championship
ing for two hours on CBS, followed by prog
called *Eye on Sports*, *Golf Club*, and *Sports F*
a regular-season baseball game—the Atl
Braves against the Pittsburgh Pirates—for t
morning hours on TBS; another NBA pla
game—the Portland Trail Blazers against
Houston Rockets—for two and a half hour
TNT; and, of course, ESPN, the network de
ed entirely to sport, which on this day aired
NASCAR Winston Select 500, the Las V
Senior Golf Classic, and the Boston Red
against the California Angels, all punctuate
constant scores and updates and by news-for
shows like *Sports Report*, *SportsCenter*,
SportsWeekly. Meanwhile, on CNN Head
News, an eternal ticker tape of game scores
silently beneath footage of the carnage in Bos
so that while contemplating the mud-stained
of a murdered Muslim, say, viewers were a
that in the second quarter the Blazers had just gone up by three after t
ing the Rockets a minute earlier. Finally, there was ESPN2, the MTV of
sporting world—slam dunks coming one after the other, set to the latest
hop hits; athletes slashing and smashing and trash-talking, taunting, po
ing, pumping their fists, dancing, cavorting, and stylishly posturing, gene
playing to the camera. Across the spectrum of the thirty or more chan
that make up American television, sport in all of its glory and diversity
a good deal more prevalent than anything else—which is, perhaps, just
other way of saying that it was like outdated sitcoms, infomercials, and
et forms of programming filler: safe, brainless, lucrative.



hat day in May was another proof of what sports fans intuitively know: there is now no end to "major" sporting events and that these are sequenced he calendar such that each may be watched by as large an audience as pos- New Year's Day, to begin at the beginning, is largely an occasion for ev- roliferating college football bowl games, three weeks later I turn toward football's Super Bowl. In February this year came the Winter Olympics, owed in March by NCAA basketball's Final Four tournament and then in il by NBA play-off contests, which, together with the NHL play-offs and tournaments, held fan interest into mid-June. Sport's movers and shak- distressed by the long, sweet lull of baseball's season, sought this July to soccer to Americans in the hope that the World Cup might supply, in tu- years, a spasm of interest through hot summers. This fall first the U.S. Open then the World Series will command fans' attention, and then sudden- ootball and basketball will return, and the cycle will repeat itself. Sport's less season binds fans upon a wheel where the end is always merely the be- ning, one championship but a prelude to the next.

nd that endless season is now overwhelmingly commercial. Arenas and fast perimeters of stadiums are thoroughly festooned with advertisements big-screen graphics that fans can neither ignore nor turn away from: the eboard, the game clock, the scorer's bench, the chairs where NBA play- est, the shirts and sweatpants worn by ball boys, the cups players drink and the towels around their necks—even the shoes they wear on their —are chockablock with sales messages. Last year baseball's American gue voted to allow its teams to install rotating electronic signs in their s, and in some these signs are now placed above and behind first and l bases. (Home plate, the holiest spot on the field, was traditionally im- e to advertising, yet in five major league stadiums the space behind home has been sold—including in my hometown of Seattle, where when Ken ffey Jr. steps up to the plate he is framed against an electronic sign ad- ising Starbucks Coffee, Ace Hardware, and Nintendo, among other panies.) Every nuance of a televised game is similarly freighted with s and slogans: a power play, fast break, or steal; a report on rebounds, as- , or blocks; an instant replay or twenty-second time-out—all have be- e occasions for celebrating the name of a paint manufacturer, telephone pany, or overnight courier service.

When I look at the slogans and icons of business now pasted every- re across the fields and screens of play, I am more than just merely ir- ed. For me they mar the aesthetic of games, subvert the clean lines of the unfolding ice dance, draw my eye from the breaking curve of a pitch, and generally destroy most of my pleasure.

I was not always so disgusted with sport; I was not always an aging crank. ost thirty years ago I sat beside my father watching the Pacific Coast ue's Seattle Rainiers play baseball against the Spokane Indians. Mount ier loomed beyond the right-field fence, and when outfielder Vada n hit a home run in that direction, the ball lost itself against the y flanks of the peak and seemed to disappear. Thousands of subse- t contests later, I can still remember this moment; it helps me under- l the yearnings of my own sons, ages thirteen, ten, and nine, who he in the air of sport as though it were oxygen. At seven in the morn- can hear them outside my window, pounding a basketball against the ment and fantasizing incessantly (*Pass in to Gill. Gill takes it to to, Kemp puts the ball between his legs, drives left, he scores!*) All day long, ny opportunity, they hit, throw, catch, run, leap, dive, shoot, tackle— all of this they find more meaning than in any of their other endeavors will pass long rainy evenings inside, kneeling on the floor amid a pile rds picturing thousands of baseball and basketball figures. For them these are significant totems, small symbols of life's magnificence—discov- ng to their parents perhaps, but in their eyes profound messages from

SPORT'S ENDLESS SEASON
BINDS FANS UPON A WHEEL
THE END IS ALWAYS MERELY THE
BEGINNING, ONE CHAMPIONSHIP
BUT A PRELUDE TO THE NEXT

In their dream of sporting glory, my sons feel themselves
field, and safe from the dark complications of adult life ha
around the corner. They trade, haggle, sort, and ra
ized shoe boxes, folders, and binders. Sometimes I find je
eep, lolling dreamily against their pillows, silently jo
statistics that accompany each hero's image.
instances offer no other diversion, my sons rely on a favri
This done, they move on to dra
e squads, teams composed of only left-handers, teams composed
s over age thirty, and teams for which no athlete is eligible who ha
st of the Mississippi River. They have an all-defensive squad, one ma
up of the best sixth men, another made up of insatiable rebounders, one
manned by shot blockers and thieves, clever ball handlers, slick passers, re
second-round draft choices. They spend time discussing in serious tone
the merits of various superstars as league MVP candidates. Over din
they heatedly denounce bad trades, lobby for particular college players as ra
candidates, and rail against the list of players named to the league's all-st
squad. When their hometown team, the Seattle SuperSonics, was ousted fro
contention for the NBA championship this year, they entered into a m
longed analysis of the forces that generated defeat.

On those occasions when we attend Sonics games, my sons will wa
arrive hours early in order to stand in a narrow co
ridor and await the passage of our home t
They will hold out pens and tablets of paper to
perately hoping for an autograph, but will sti
with glowing satisfaction for a mere brush fr
player's hand. In the final seconds of games je
decided, they burst from their seats in an ec
rush—their father trailing some distance behi
in the hope of receiving yet one more touch
players departing the arena. Not even the
churlish or mean-spirited athlete ever re
wounds or disappoints them, for, like the Gr
my sons seem fully to expect that the gods w
childish and flawed. It is enough to stand so
to these heroes while they pass with sweat
burnishing their shoulders and their faces suf
with the heat of the game—men whose eyes s
to see in a higher plane and to look not thr
us but beyond. My sons are mesmerized by
sheer prowess, their size, their power.



Like many children in America, my sons ar
pable of a devotion to sport astonishing in it
tensity. And this devotion, it's easy to see, is in
process of being subverted to the purposes of t
who would profit by it.* Children, my own
cluded, are deftly manipulated by the images of athletes presented in TV
vertisements. My boys are rendered spellbound—literally—by the pastic
improbably acrobatic slam dunks performed for the purpose of selling N
or Reeboks, and will frantically call for silence in the room so as to better
concentrate on what they're witnessing. These advertisements are, to their

inking, every bit as important as the game itself, and the subject of much versation among them. They can recite an ad's script in its entirety and te a play-by-play account of its narrative content and progress. They re- ad most powerfully to Shaquille O'Neal, the Orlando Magic's young whom Madison Avenue not so much found as created to replace Michael lan as America's consummate pitchman. Although clearly a premier ete, O'Neal represents something new in sport: the athlete who is a mar- ng tool first and a player of his game second. In advertisements, he is por- ed as monstrously powerful and terrifyingly fearsome—like the ogre in ry tale—but with a gentle affinity for children. Whereas Jordan was sleek, ghtless, and ethereal—inspiring among children the fantasy of flight— leal is the mythical friendly giant who encourages children to believe that vill never use his power against them. Introduced into prime time nine 's apart, Jordan and O'Neal illustrate the accelerating cultural technol- invented by the nexus of advertisers, television executives, and NBA makers: Jordan's image evolved and emerged over the course of many s; O'Neal's was concocted before he first stepped onto a professional bas- ball court. O'Neal is a movie star and rap singer, a looming presence in ertisements, and is better known among children for his amiable and ma- ous grin than for his merits as an athlete.

All of this makes me wonder if, in effect, the athlete might someday be- ne an anachronism. Is it the profit-laden image of the athlete that now matters most? Is it those children who can be made to respond to sports advertisements—instead of to the poetry of sport itself—who represent sport's future?

The poetry of games is no mere abstraction, though it is a metaphor. oever has played a sport well or been immersed in the wordless heat of me knows that the rhythmic swirl of movement holds an ineffable beau- The body becomes, for a brief, haunting interlude, its own manner of fine- ntient consciousness, making decisions without benefit of thought and ghting in its choices. The matrix of the field or court or arena and the ve of moving bodies induce an altered state of being. The ordinary ld yields to the world of the game before fading altogether from con- usness.

know from my years as a basketball player—a season of my life filled with us intensity—that sport can feel something like dreaming. There is on- ur breathing and the physics of the moment, the awareness of a basketball ing your hand to thread through the narrowest of apertures—an aper- that did not exist in the half second before your fingers let the ball go that was nevertheless wholly known to you; an aperture that will begin al up even before the ball has passed entirely through it—and the *right-* with which the ball finds its destination (a rightness attainable nowhere), guided without forethought at just this angle and propelled at this on- oper speed while the game wraps itself around everything. It is this state fairs, commensurate with bliss, that the athlete finds inexpressible.

ut, inexorably, most of us become spectators; we grasp our athletic medi- cy by the time we are sixteen, and this awareness marks the terminus of investment in sport as a part of our identity. Our Little League or swim- n successes, so universally celebrated, turn out to be meaningless in the d scheme of things, and we are forced to seek a new version of ourselves is more mature and less physical. This new persona, however thorough adjustment to it, lives always in the shadow of our sporting one, so that in their forties, in particular, are inclined to tell boys not only how to their baseball bats but also that, not long ago, they too wore uniforms performed with a grace they cannot even begin to explain. Their minds the memory of what their bodies once were and dream of what they once d do (if even only once or twice), and this is as powerful in the souls of as love, work, and sex. It is part of what makes men obsessive in their of sport and feeds their desire to cheer and exult, to purchase magazines

THE CAREERS OF MICHAEL JORDAN AND SHAQUILLE O'NEAL, BEGINNING NINE YEARS APART, ILLUSTRATE THE ACCELERATING CULTURAL TECHNOLOGY INVENTED BY THE NEXUS OF ADMEN, TV EXECUTIVES, AND NBA DEAL MAKERS



WITH OUR FINANCIAL STRENGTH, YOU'LL BE GLA

WE'RE ON YOUR SIDE. *On the tough playing field of international business, you n*

all the fortune [illegible] why AIG's strength and stability are so important. We're one of the wor

strongest insurance and financial services organizations, with over $15 billion in shareholders' equity c



l billion in general insurance net loss and loss adjustment reserves. Our record of profitability is unsurpassed
ie industry, and we hold the highest ratings from the principal rating services. The AIG Companies have the
city to serve your needs through all kinds of market conditions. We're ready to throw our weight behind you.

IG **WORLD LEADERS IN INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES.**

a few images from the athletic front, to lend their ears to the ridicu
minutiae of endless sport-talk radio, and to squander $120 for the right t
near the clash of athletes. The fan's fiercely felt allegiance to sport—I
ognize this as occurring in my own heart—is a fiercely felt allegiance to
itself, a panicked hold he keeps on youth as with time his intimations of
tality resonate with ever-deepening seriousness.

Yet above all else the spectator of sport desires the poetic moment:
shortstop diving long to his left, stopping a ground ball the eye can't fol
then rising to throw in an impossible gyration and beating the runner
millisecond (and afterward, adjusting his cap, nonchalant and inscrutab
Or the elegant point guard slashing in from the left who leaves the ball
hind his head for the teammate trailing after him, a silky forward who
leap and double-pump his graceful legs, then wait while his off-balance
fender descends just half a beat ahead of him, and at the last moment
the ball from right to left to lay it softly off the glass at a high angle—a
if this were an ordinary act he can perform without particular duress. O
wide receiver going long and longer still, the football apparently just sli
ly overthrown, and even while we judge from our limited perspec
whether the quarterback hasn't given it too much arm, already here is
improbably swift receiver, not only leaping but flinging himself, as if fl
from the edge of a precipice, the ball now poised on the tips of three fin
the opposing team's cornerback arriving at exactly this moment to
himself at the receiver's head, and all the while the gravityless receiver
catches the ball, balancing it on his fingertips, then drawing it into his
stretched palm, then clutching it against his side, against his ribs, whil
defender pummels him out of bounds, seeking to thrash free the ball
his grip, and still he has the graceful presence to nestle both feet agains
neatly drawn sideline before he is slammed full-tilt toward the turf, w
rather than curling in contorted pain he performs an amazing, one-ha
cartwheel, easily rights himself, slows to a trot, releases the ball from the
of his right hand, and turns once again in the direction of his teammates
his shirt still neatly tucked inside his pants.

This lyricism given corporeal expression is what the spectator ex
and desires of sport: a performance of the body that whi
to the spirit and suggests that our bodies are chariots in w
we, too, might ride toward heaven.

If the history of capitalism, from the perspective of our emotio
not from the perspective of our material comfort), is understood as a s
of thefts—the theft of nature, place, and family, of daily kinship and
munity—then it may be possible that in our time we are witnessing the
of sport too. Having fathomed how powerful and fundamental is our y
ing for sport, sport's profiteers are now proceeding with the ambitious
of wringing from it all that they can. This objective requires that gam
skillfully manipulated and shrewdly presented, and also that the play
games be carefully and artfully commodified. As a sports fan I know thi
terly and experience the packaging of athletic heroes as an espec
painful loss. When I see the athlete-cum-peddler on television, haw
hamburgers or deodorants, I suffer an emotional dissonance. It cann
that this superhuman figure—a man or woman whom God allows to
across the sky—is the huckster now gesticulating before me so sham
ly on the screen, asking me to buy a certain car tire. Though drones
is I sold out long ago in the knowledge that selling out is necessary, I
ertheless vaguely thought—or vaguely hoped—that our athletes, lik
gels, might be impervious. It is, of course, a ridiculous request, asking
athletes to be better than I am, but I can't seem to help myself. I view
appearances in advertisements not only as a bitter dose of reality bu
humiliation that includes me too: if Michael Jordan cannot hold ou

his multimillions for playing basketball), or rise above the common
f money-grubbers of which I find myself a part, what hope is there for
e like me.' For any of us, for that matter.' We will go to our graves like
ackeys and hustlers we inwardly suspect ourselves to be, and we will
ithout the balm or respite of heroes who live with souls untainted, ex-
ary fellows all. This is business's unkindest cut, this usurping of our ath-
heroes ("I'm going to Disney World!" skater Nancy Kerrigan proclaimed
e aftermath of her finest Olympic performance), or, rather, this remaking
r athletic heroes in business's own pandering image. Far too many of
gods have been purchased, and our only consolation is the under-
ding that at least they went for a hefty sum; we would have done the
.

ere things always such? It seems not. Sometime in the early 1970s the
onship between sport and business, established in America more than
ntury ago (when baseball emerged on the national scene), began to
ge. The dictates of games, their fundamental principles, the emo-
, loyalties, and aesthetics of sports lovers, were gradually subsumed by
ess considerations. While we watched, the economics of sport began
oliferate with such Malthusian energy that the real players—the net-
s, the shoe companies, the owners, the agents, the ad agencies—could
nger allow the game to be dictated by, well, the games themselves. Con-
that in 1972, ABC paid $7.5 million to televise the Summer Olympic
es, whereas NBC paid more than $400 mil-
for the same opportunity twenty years later.
larly, in 1973 the New York Yankees were val-
at $10 million; by 1991 that figure had
ed $225 million. In 1973 the average base-
salary was $36,566 and baseball's highest-
player was Dick Allen of the Chicago White
who earned $225,000, in 1993 Bobby Bonil-
the New York Mets earned $6.2 million.
t more? The New York Yankees have a play-
yroll this year of more than $44 million.
television revenues rose to $40 million per
last year. In the period from 1990 to 1993
r league baseball television revenues totaled
billion. Leigh Steinberg, an agent who calls
ro athletes he represents "specialists in the
rtainment business," last year negotiated a
act for Steve Young, quarterback of the San
cisco 49ers, that totaled $26.7 million. This
e pales next to the reported $50 million con-
that Dallas Cowboy Troy Aikman signed
December. That figure, in turn, pales next to
Johnson's current contract with the Char-
Hornets, which will pay him $84 million.
t has grown with miraculous energy (like
a's economy, Wal-Mart stock, and the national debt), and it is now
dustry generating unquantifiable billions in this, its Golden Era.
ith the fantastic sums have come rationales that have made the very fab-
nd substance of games—their rules, rhythms, strategies, and tempera-
s—progressively subject to the inroads of business imperatives. Games
been systematically repackaged by franchise magnates meeting in the
of the Seventies' OPEC ministers for the purpose of transforming them
dvertising opportunities and spectacles of ever-widening appeal. Pro foot-
ntroduced the "two-minute warning," a rule designed to halt the progress
y for the purpose of advertising. Basketball was retooled some years ago
clude a twenty-four-second clock, a measure meant to speed up the
and make it more palatable to an audience that prefers frenetic move-
to patient strategy. At the same time, teams were allowed more time-

WHILE WE WATCHED
THE ECONOMICS OF SPORT
PROLIFERATED WITH SUCH
MALTHUSIAN ENERGY THAT
REAL PLAYERS COULD NO
LET THE GAME BE DICTATED
BY THE GAME ITSELF



six divisions—because team owners want to glean the financial bene
average, $2 million per season, so their precious arms must be preserve
longer do they take the mound every fourth game, as they did as recen
the 1970s; managers are today likely to yank them early and use four
pitchers in a contest.) Games in all sports now start at hours of the da
and play often is halted at the discretion of officials who call time-ou
commercials.

The irony of sport's free-market miracle is that sport has been, for
years, resistant to the mechanisms of the free market. Sporting league
in reality cartels with a higher immunity to antitrust laws than other
nesses in America. Dividing the national market among their men
they exercise control over the business of sport, sharing revenues, regul
wages, manipulating workers through drafts and trades, and admitti
denying the entry of new franchises into the marketplace. City governm
are blackmailed by local franchises, which threaten to move teams to
sonville or Charlotte unless public dollars are committed to their needs
dums and parking lots built for their benefit, and partial revenues
luxury suites poured into the coffers of team owners. And sport is subj
the impulse, where profitable, to create newly lucrative permutations of
Last May, in the aftermath of the NFL's decision to jump from CBS to th
network for an annual sum of $395 million, CBS began discussions wi
consortium of major advertisers" about launching a new pro football le
"The idea behind the league," reported the *New York Times*, "was to find
porations closely associated with cities that would be the home teams
new league. Thus, Federal Express would back the team located in its
market of Memphis. A team in St. Louis would be backed by Anhe
Busch. [CBS Broadcast Group president Howard] Stringer said as far as he
only Federal Express had confirmed its interest in the new league, b
agreed the notion of corporate-backed teams, which would wear uniform
tooned with corporate logos, had some viability."

Whether or not such a league comes to pass, it seems to indicate th
ture shape of things. The new world of sport will, perhaps, be *unabas*
corporate. It will also be international, as the sports executives are fo
reminding us in tones once reserved for the exploration of space o
conquest of polio. They speak of contests in Tokyo, Barcelona, and M
co City as if globalization were a kind of destiny (last February, for th
timated sum of $285 million, Coca-Cola became the first "global" sp
of the NBA), encouraging us to desire a time when the American eth
sport-as-business thrives on nearly every continent and eroding our ps
objections to such a future, our inner disturbance at the prospect of l
the intimacy and emotion of sport. (In April the NBA's board of gove
voted to change a pre-season European tournament known as the Mc
ald's Open into a "world championship" pitting the NBA champ agains
pr o te ms from eight countries. "This would make the McDonald's Op
even more important part of the global sports calendar and a more p
ful marketing platform for companies to launch multination media t
nd promotions," said David Schreff, an NBA executive, in an intervi
Advertising Age.) Our objections to this dismal future will remain i
vant unless they diminish sport's profit margin, and our disturbance wil
be a cause for dismay among sports magnates and executives. Yet we will
tinue each season to make our pilgrimage to arenas, playing fields, an
diums. Always in the hope that somehow, today, sport will resemble i
We will throng in search of the sleek drag bunt, the no-look pass, the
ball spiraling through afternoon light, but such pure moments, such fl
the soul, will, I fear, be harder to come by as sport is packaged and
d and owned by somebody else.

INHALING THE SPORE

Field trip to a museum of natural (un)history

By Lawrence Weschler

Deep in the Cameroonian rain forests of West Africa there lives a floor-dwelling ant known as *Megaloponera foetens*, or, more commonly, the stink ant. This large ant—indeed, it's one of the very few capable of emitting a cry audible to the human ear—survives by foraging for food among the fallen leaves and undergrowth of the extraordinarily rich rain-forest floor.

On occasion, while thus foraging, one of these ants will become infected by inhaling the microscopic spore of a fungus from the genus *Tomentella*, one of millions of such spores raining down upon the forest floor from somewhere in the canopy above. Upon being inhaled, the spore lodges itself inside the ant's tiny brain and immediately begins to grow, quickly fomenting bizarre behavioral changes in its host. The creature appears troubled and confused, and now, for the first time in its life, it leaves the forest floor and begins an arduous climb up the stalk of a vine or fern.

Driven on by the still-growing fungus, the ant finally achieves a seemingly prescribed height, whereupon, utterly spent, it attaches its mandibles to the plant it has been climbing and, thus affixed, waits to die. Ants that have met their doom in this fashion are quite a common sight in certain sections of the rain forest.

The fungus, for its part, lives on: it continues to consume the ant's brain, moving through the rest of the nervous system and presently through all the soft tissue that remains of the ant. After approximately two weeks, a spikelike protrusion erupts from what was once the ant's head. Growing to a length of about an inch and a half, the spike features a bright-orange tip heavily laden with spores, which now begin to rain down onto the forest floor for other unsuspecting ants to inhale.

The great mid-century American neurophysiologist Geoffrey Sonnabend inhaled his spore, as it were, one insomniac night in 1936 while convalescing from a combined physical and nervous breakdown at a small resort near the majestic Iguassu Falls, in the so-called Mesopotamian region at the Argentinean-Brazilian-Paraguayan frontier. Earlier that evening, he had attended a recital of German Romantic lieder given by the great Romanian-American vocalist Madelena Delani. Delani, one of the leading soloists on the international concert circuit of her day, was known to suffer from a rare form of Korsakov's syndrome, with its attendant obliteration of virtually all short- and intermediate-term memory, with the exception, in her case, of the memory of music itself.

Although Sonnabend left the concert hall that evening without ever meeting Delani, the concert had electrified him, and through a sleepless night he conceived, as if in a single blast of inspiration, a radical new theory of memory, a theory he'd spend the next decade painstaking-

Lawrence Weschler is the author of Seeing Is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees, *a biography of the artist Robert Irwin, and* A Miracle, a Universe: Settling Accounts With Torturers.

...d masterwork, "we, amnesiacs all, condemned to live in an eternally fleeting present, ...ons, memory, to buffer ourselves against the intolerable knowledge of the irreversible passage of time and irretrievability of its moments and events." (page 16) He continued to expand on this doctrine through the explication of an increasingly intricate model in which a so-called Cone of Obliscence is bisected by Planes of Experience, which continually slice the cone at changing though precise angles. The theory was ...ch it broached such uncanny shadow phenomena as the experiences of premonition, déjà vu, and foreboding. But once the plane of any particular experience had passed through the cone, the experience was irretrievably forgotten, and all else was illusion —a particularly haunting conclusion, in that no sooner had Sonnabend published his magnum opus than both he and it fell largely in-...

As for Delani, ironically, and utterly unbeknownst to Sonnabend, she had perished in a freak automobile accident within a few days of her concert at Iguassu Falls.

For his part, Donald R. Griffith, Rockefeller University's eminent chiroptologist (and author of *Listening in the Dark: Echolocation in Bats and Men*), appears to have inhaled something suspiciously sporelike back in 1952, while reading the field reports of an obscure late-nineteenth-century American ethnographer named Bernard Maston. While doing fieldwork in 1872 among ...cuni-Caribe in region of northern South America, Maston reported having heard several accounts of the *leprong mori*, or piercing devil, ...the locals were believed to penetrate solid objects," such as the walls of their thatch huts ...

Almost eighty years later, while reviewing some of Maston's notes in the archive, Griffith,

BERNARD MASTON REPORTED ACCOUNTS OF THE *DEPRONG MORI*, "A SMALL DEMON WHICH THE LOCAL SAVAGES ... PENETRATE SOLID OBJECTS"

for some reason, as he later recounted, "smelled a bat." He and a band of assistants undertook an arduous eight-month expedition to the Tumucumaque Plateau, where Griffith grew increasingly convinced that he was dealing not with just a bat but with a very special bat indeed, and specifically the tiny *Myotis lucifugus*, which the previously documented had never before been studied in detail. It became Griffith's hypothesis that whereas most bats deploy frequencies in the ultrasonic range to assist them in the echolocation that enables them to fly in the dark, *Myotis lucifugus* had evolved a highly specialized form of echolocation based on ultraviolet wavelengths, which even, in some instances, verged into the neighboring X-ray band of the wave spectrum. Furthermore, these particular bats had evolved highly elaborate nose leaves, or horns, which allowed them to focus their echowave transmissions in a narrow beam. A ... which would account for the wide range of bizarre effects described by Maston's informants.

Griffith and his team ... lacked for proof. Time ... time, the little devils, on the very verge of ... ture, would fly seamlessly through their net ... Griffith devised a brilliant snaring device ... sisting of five solid-lead walls, each one ... inches thick, twenty feet high, and two hundred feet long—all of them arrayed in a radial pattern like spokes of a giant wheel, along the forest floor. The team affixed seismic sensors all along the walls in an intricate gridlike pattern, and proceeded to wait.

For two months, the monitors recorded nothing—surely the bats were simply avoiding the massive, and massively incongruous, lead walls, and Griffith began to despair of ever confirming his hypothesis. Finally, however, early on the morning of August 18, at 4:13 A.M., the sensors recorded a pock. The number-three wall had received an impact of magnitude 10^3 ergs twenty feet above the forest floor, 193 feet out from the center of the wheel. The team members carried an X-ray-viewing device out to the indicated spot, and sure enough, at a depth of 7 1/8 inches they located the first *Myotis lucifugus* ever obtained by man, "eternally frozen in a mass of solid lead."

Megaloponera foetens, *Myotis lucifugus*, Geoffrey Sonnabend and Madelena Delani, Dozo and the *deprong mori*, Bernard Maston and Donald R. Griffith—these and countless other spores rain down upon a small, nondescript storefront operation located along the main commercial drag of downtown Culver City, in the middle of West Los Angeles's ...

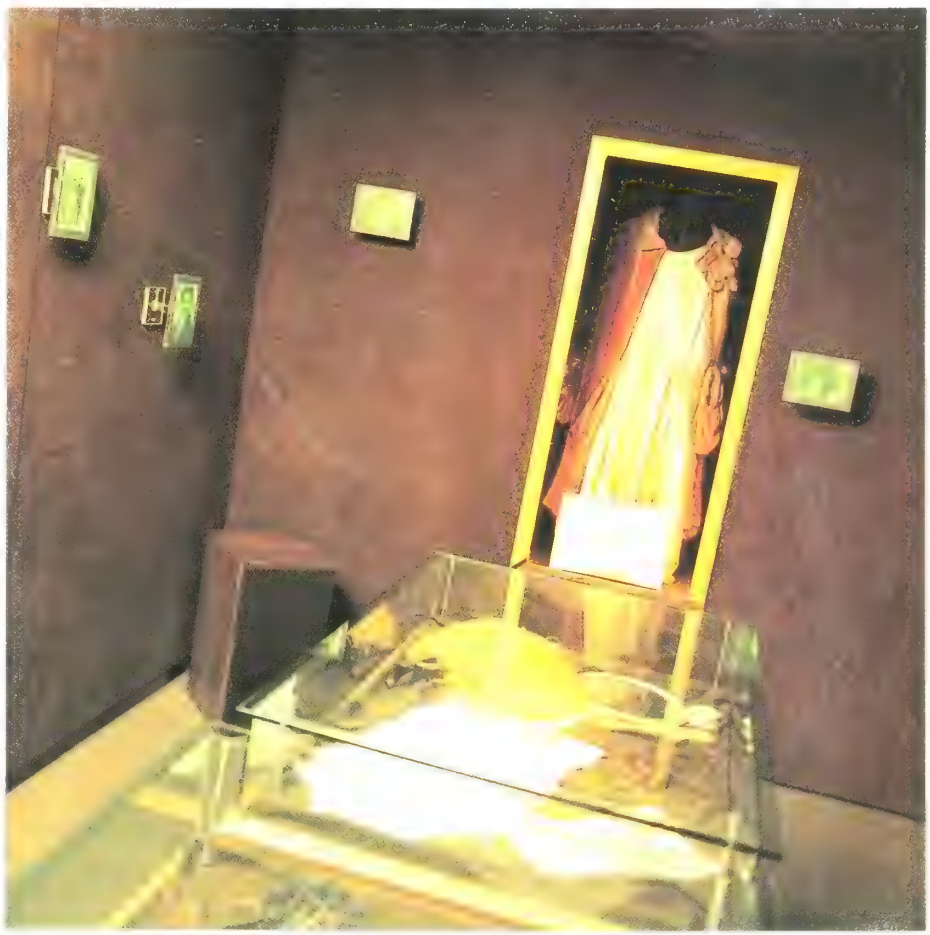
seudo-urban sprawl: the Museum of Jurassic
chnology (according to a fading blue ban-
nanging outside), an institution that
nts precisely the sort of anonymous look
cade one might easily pass right by. Which
days would be just as well, since most days
osed.

t you happened to hear of it, as I began
ng of it a couple years ago on my occasion
its to L.A. (it's been at that site for about
ars now), and thus actively sought it out;
e, if you just happened to be
ng at the bus stop right out-
ts portals on one of those
ions when it actually was
—well then, your curiosity
d, you might just find your-
ing up and tentatively press-
door buzzer. While waiting
answer, you might study
rious little diorama slotted
he wall off to the side of the
(a diminutive white urn sur-
ed by floating pearlescent
s) or another equally per-
g diorama off to the other
the entry (three chemistry-
ttles arrayed in a curiously
display: oxide of titanium,
of iron, and alumina, ac-
g to their labels).

length the door is likely to
and usually it will be David
rand Wilson himself, the
m's founder and director, a
and unassuming man, per-
n his mid-forties, who will
iling there solicitously (as
ere specifically you he'd
expecting all along) and
y bidding you to enter.

dark in there. As your eyes
, you take in an old wood-
k, on top of which a small
roposes an admissions do-
of $3, though Wilson quickly assures you
his is a neighborhood museum and hence
anybody from the neighborhood, and
furthermore, he considers the bus-stop
to be an integral part of the neighbor-
He leaves it to you to decide what that
, and for that matter, he leaves it all to
le returns to his seat behind the desk and
reading (two dusty antiquated books, the
ne I was there one entitled *Mental Hospi*
e other, *The Elements of Folk Psychology*).
yer, as it were, features a shabby, kind of
arted attempt at a gift shop, but probably
n't tarry long because your curiosity is al-
eing drawn toward the museum proper.

An hr' here that [illegible]
[illegible]
exotically turbaned, the [illegible]
diva, the insomniac . . . A preserved sample of
the stink ant, for example, has its mandibles
embedded into the stalk of a plastic fern be-
hind glass in a standard natural-history-muse-
um-style diorama. Sure enough, a little spike
erupting out of its head. There's a phone re-
ceiver beside the vitrine, and when you pick it
up you'll hear the entire history of *Megalopon-*



era foetens, largely as I conveyed it above.

A whole wing of the museum has been given
over to the so-called Sonnabend Pelham Hall,
where, among other things, you'll find an as-
tonishingly well-realized aquarium-size diorama
of Iguassu Falls, where Sonnabend heard Delam
perform, complete with gushing, recirculating
water. It turns out, or so the nearby phone re-
ceiver will inform you, that the falls were doubly
significant in Sonnabend's life, for they were al-
so the place where he proposed to Hortense. Her
father, Wilhelm, a young German structural en-
gineer, had been attempting to span the falls
with a daring suspension bridge, but the project
had come to naught, his dream collapsing irre-



...and Love's Immaterial's whole the... ...of boundless series—haunting d... ...mentally intersecting and compelli... ...overlapping cones and planes, complex... a representation of such technical subtleti... perverse and obverse experience boundar... Spelean Ring Disparity, "the Hollows," a... haps most provocatively, the Cone of Cer... lation. (The voice in the receiver, the sam... as in all the other receivers, you may sudde... alize, is the same bland, slightly unctuou... you've heard in every museum slide sh... acoustiguide tour or PBS nature special you've ever endured: the reassuringly measured vo... unassailable institutional authority.)

...sum, as it were, devoted to the career of one ...

Over to the side there's a whole room ... ed exclusively to Madelena Delani, and ... the corner you come upon another bench a... other phone receiver and another elabora... play, this one detailing the bizarrely inter... careers of Maston and Griffith. Once agai... row-beam spotlights rise up and fade away ... ...through the narrative—inclu... detailed exposition of how echolocation w... bats, complete with charts and graphs—a... nating with a re-creation of a solid tranch... the lead wall, which presently become... mined, as if from inside, in such a way th... can actually see the bat embedded there ... flight.

Through much of these explorations, y... well be the only person inside the museum ... from Wilson, and he's a bit of a piercing... himself. He pads about silently as you lose ... self in the various exhibits. One moment ... his desk, the next he's gone, though who ... where—perhaps to a workroom secreted ... back of the store; a few moments later, h... er, he's back reading at his desk, as if he'd ... been gone at all. You continue to poke ab... there are a good dozen other exhibits up ... given time—and presently, eerily, you be... aware of strains of Bach being played on ... . . . could it be an accordion? The desk c... empty, the front door has been left slightly ... Wilson is on the sidewalk, blithely serenadi...

You leave him to it. You continue to ex... Depending on what happens to be up at the ... you're visiting, you may, for example, com... on the luminous white skeleton of some ki... rodent elegantly mounted on plush velve... neath a glass bell. ("EUROPEAN MOLE—*Talp*... *ropea*," explains the wall caption. "Occurs ... ... except Ireland. . . .") Beneath another glass ... you can study "The Mary Rose Collecti... ... "Common Household Country Fr... Moths." ("There's a slight misnomer there," ... son informed me solicitously the first time I p...

some it's hard to tell.")

long a nearby wall (just off to the side, ac-
ly, from the vitrine containing the spike-
uting ant) there's another standard museum-

llest of the lot: a solitary hairy protrusion.

ony, inside quotation

m, The Ark" to the effect
"we were shown an ex-

"It had grown on the back of a woman's head.
The horn was blackish in color, not very
k or hard, but well proportioned." As, in-
l, this specimen is.

nother display, entitled "Protective Aditoo-
fimicry," allows you to compare, by pushing
requisite buttons, the sounds made by certain
l, iridescent beetles, "when threatened," with
e made by certain similarly sized and hued
les "while at rest." By this time, you, too, may
arting to feel a little but threatened, a bit ir-
ent. You head back to the foyer where Wil-
is back behind his desk, once again absorbed
s reading, the accordion resting along the wall
is side like a snoozing pet. You putter among
giftware, confused, hesitant.

"Um, excuse me," you may at length
hazard. "Ahm, what exactly is this
place?"

Excuse me," I asked several months back
rd the end of my first visit. "Ahm, what ex-
is this place?" Wilson looked up from his
ing: beatific deadpan.

suppose I should say something here about
on's own presence, his own look, for it is of
ce with his museum. I have described him
minutive, though a better word might be
an." His features are soft and yet precise, a
l forehead, short black hair graying at the
, a close-cropped version of an Amish beard,
mustache, fringing his face and filling into
eeks. He wears circular glasses, which some-
accentuate the elfin effect. He's been le-
ed as Ahab inhabiting the body of Puck (a
Ahab, a monomaniacal Puck), but the best
iption I ever heard came from his wife of
ty-five years, Diana (an anthropology grad-
student and no particular giant herself; their
ds sometimes refer to the two of them as
"little Wilsons"), who one day characterized
ooks for me as those of "a pubescent Nean-
al."

the time), "as you can see, we're a small natural-
going on: "We're definitely interested in pre-
senting phenomena that other natural-history
museums seem unwilling to present." Appar-
ently he could sense that I remained a bit be-

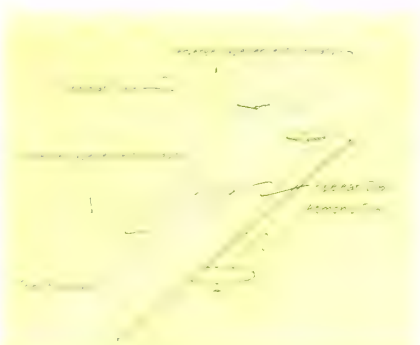
"WE'RE A SMALL NATURAL-HISTORY MUSEUM," DAVID WILSON SAYS. "WE'RE INTERESTED IN PRESENTING PHENOMENA THAT OTHER NATURAL-HISTORY MUSEUMS SEEM UNWILLING TO PRESENT"

wildered. "The name lends a sense of what's
inside but doesn't refer to a specific geologic
time," he offered, helpfully. He reached into
his drawer and pulled out a pamphlet. "Here,
this might be useful."

the pamphlet's cover announced portentously,
"—AND YOU." Inside, the pamphlet opened with
a "GENERAL STATEMENT":

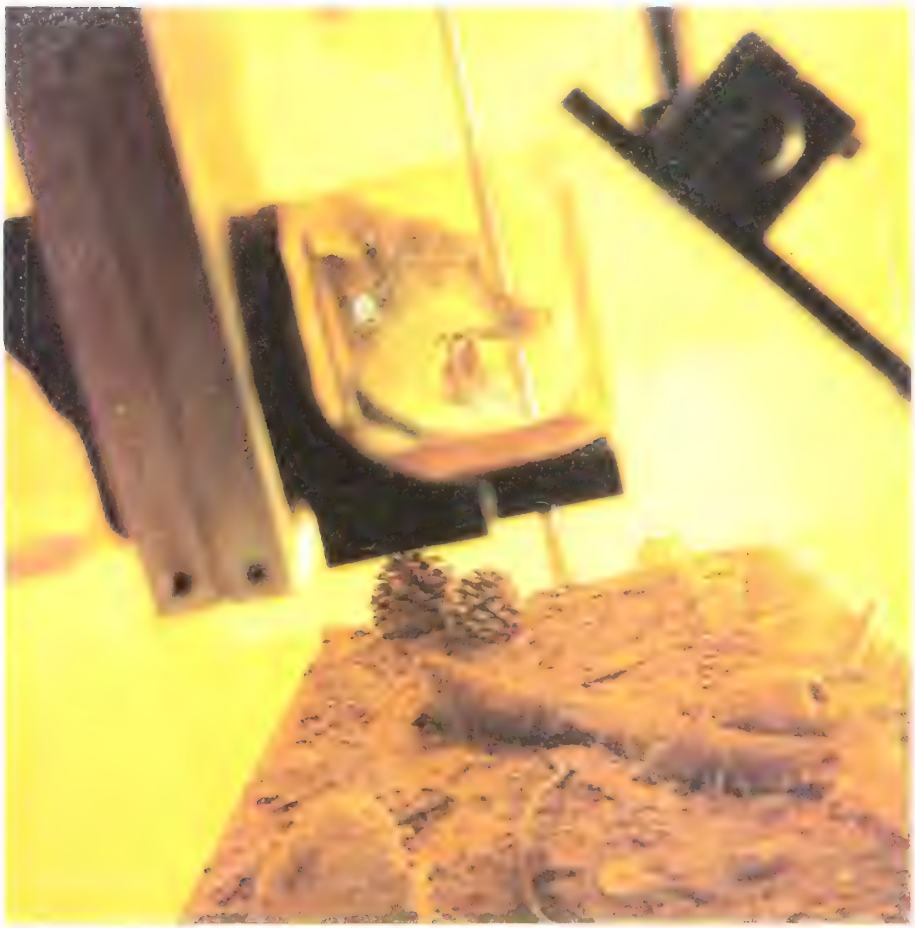
There immediately follows a small map, cap-
exactly like a small map of
what the rest of us might re-
fer to as "Egypt." An arrow

the Nile River delta as "Low-
er Jurassic."



to offer a treatise on museums in general. It traces
progenitors as the Ptolemys' Library at Alexan-

tered amid relic-preserving convents and monas-
eighteenth centuries, when the impulse flowered
Mary, Olaus Worm with his "Museum Worm-
anum," and Elias Ashmole, until finally, in late-
Willson Peale virtually invented the museum as a



In fact, many of the exhibits in the MIT, according to the pamphlet, were originally part of smaller and less-well-known collections, such as the Devonian and Eocene. In the slide-show version,
consistency now swells up as the narrative builds
even today, the museum preserves something of the

unending Punishment.

All of which helped, and didn't.

"Um," I tried again, after having finished th
pamphlet, "but I mean, how, specifically, did th
discovered?"

"You mean *this* museum?" Wilson asked.

Well, yeah.

"Oh," he said. "Well, the se
material, I guess you could call it,
the current collection—the Ele
behemoths, for instance—ca
down to us through the collecti
of curiosities originally gathered t
gether by the Thums—that's Ow
Thum and his son, Owen Thu
the Younger, who were botanis
or I guess really just gardeners,
southwestern Nebraska, in Sou
Platte."

When was this?

"Oh, in the first half of this ce
tury—say, the Twenties for the
ther and on into the Fifties wi
Owen the Younger." Wilson th
spun out an elaborately unlike
saga involving the Thums a
Thum the Younger's widow, w
lost the collection to an unsav
lawyer named Gerald Billius, w
may even have murdered her to g
it but who then gradually gr
bored with his acquisition, eve
tually allowing it to lapse into t
hands of his granddaughter, a cu
Texas matron named M
Rose Cannon, whom Wilson hi
self subsequently happened to m
one day in Pasadena. It was all,
I would subsequently come to r
ognize, a quintessentially Wilso
an narrative: ornate, almost profuse, in some
its details but then suddenly fogging over, p
ticularly as one gets closer to the present. Su
stories usually both perform and require a ki

And how, for instance—I'd started choosi
and Geoffrey Sonnabe
and Madelena Delani, um, entered his life?

"Well, I first came upon Sonnabend wh
we were trying to expand an exhibit we used
have on memory. I myself tend to be pretty f
getful, so that memory's always been an inter
of mine, and I was exploring the theories
Hermann Ebbinghaus, who was a great turn-
the-century German memory researcher, in f

atalized the whole field. I was at the Univer
Research Library over at UCLA one day,
ing through their Ebbinghaus books, when
ist happened to come upon Sonnabend's
ee-volume *Obliscence* the next call letter over.
eemed like nobody had looked into those
ks in ages—they hadn't been checked out in
rs—but I started reading. Sonnabend himself
s the story about the theory's genesis, about
delena Delani and Iguassu Falls in the pref-
, and I was completely bowled over. In part,
ppose, it was the romance of this theory that
med to foretell its own oblivion. And then,
t a few days later, I happened to be listening
im Svejda's *Record Shelf* program on KUSC,
d he was doing a whole hour show devoted ex-
sively to Madelena Delani—that, for in-
nce, is how I first found out about how she
d. It was an incredible coincidence—in fact,
erything associated with the story is like a tis-
of improbable coincidences—how they al-
st met, how they didn't, what either of them
s doing there at the falls. And those kinds of
ncidences are also a special
erest of ours here at the mu-
m. We contacted the
ic ago Historical Society,
d a fellow there named Rusty
vis helped us enormously,
ticularly with the Gunther
nnection. The whole thing just grew and grew."

t was getting late—time to be gone and gone. I was opening the door to leave, I once again ticed the diorama of the urn and the moths. hat about that?

"Oh, that's a little urn surrounded by French ths—or, no, maybe Flemish, I'm not sure."

And what was the significance of the urn?

"It's just an urn. I don't think it means any-ng."

And that other diorama—the chemistry-set tles?

"Oxide of titanium, oxide of iron, and alumi-" Wilson recited solemnly. "Those are the ee chemical constituents of corundum, which ms the basis for all sapphires and rubies. Ac-lly, we have the bottles out there because of link to sapphires, which, as you may know, have long been associated with qual-ities of faithfulness and endurance."

A few days later I happened to be at the CLA library researching another project, and f on a lark, I started rifling through the com-terized card catalogue. "Ebbinghaus, Her-nn," I typed in, and sure enough there rose a slew of references ("Memory: A Contri-tion to Experimental Psychology," 1913, etc.). en I typed in "Sonnabend, Geoffrey," and e screen churned for a while before finally clocking in "no record found." I tried "[illegible] called "Northwestern University Press," Sonnabend's supposed publisher, but they'd never heard of him either. I called [illegible] asked for Jim Svejda; when he came on, I explained the situation, told him about the exhibit, and asked if he'd ever done a show about the singer Madelena Delani. He just laughed and laughed: never heard of her. I called information in Chicago and got the number for the Chicago Historical Society. Once I got through to them, I asked dubiously for Rusty Lewis, who, however, did turn out to exist. Had he ever heard of Charles Gunther? "You mean the candy tycoon?" he shot back, without missing a beat. He went on to confirm every single one of the exhibit's details about Gunther—his collection, the Appomattox Surrender's historic table, even the snake skin, which remains in the Historic Society's collections to this day.

Back at the library I looked up the ethnographer Bernard Maston: no record found. I typed in "Donald R. Griffith": no record found.

AS I TELL DONALD GRIFFIN ABOUT THE PIERCING DEVILS AND THE THATCH ROOFS, THE LEAD WALLS AND THE X-RAY EMANATIONS, HE LAUGHS HARDER AND HARDER

For some reason, I tried that reference by title too—*Listening in the Dark*—and that time I hit pay dirt, except that the book had a different subtitle and its author was Donald R. Griffin, not Griffith. I went upstairs to look over the book's index but found no references to Maston, the Dozo, or any *deprong mori*. I went back downstairs, tracked down Griffin's most recent whereabouts, and called him. When I reached him, I started out by explaining about the museum (he'd never heard of it) and its exhibit about Donald R. Griffith—"Oh no," he interrupted. "My name is Griffin, with an *n*, not Griffith." I know, I said, I know. I went on to ask him if he'd ever heard of a bat named *Myotis lucifugus*. "Of course," he said, "That's the most common, abundant species in North America. That's why we used it on all the early research on echolocation." Did its range extend to South America? Not as far as he knew, why? As I proceeded to tell him about the piercing devils and the thatch roofs, the lead walls and the X-ray emanations, he was laughing harder and harder. Finally, calming down, he said, "No, no, none of that is me, it's all nonsense—on second thought you'd better leave the spelling of the name Griffith the way it is." He was quiet for a moment, then continued, almost wistfully, "Still, you know, it's funny. Fifty years

the exis-

people thought that idea no less pre-

"He never ever breaks irony—that's one of the incredible things about him." I was talking with Marcia Tucker, the director of New York City's New Museum, about David Wilson. It turns out there's a growing cult among art and museum people who can't seem to get enough of

I turned: the L.A. County Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art, the Getty. "When you're in there with him," Tucker went on, "everything initially just seems self-evidently what it is. There's this fine line, though, between knowing you're experiencing something and sensing that something is wrong. There's this slight slippage, which is the very essence of the place. And Wilson's own presence there behind the desk, the literal-minded way in which he earnestly and seemingly openly answers all your questions—it all contributes seamlessly to that sense of slippage. Visiting the Jurassic is a bit like being in psychoanalysis. The place affords this marvelous field for projection and transference. It's like a museum, a critique of museums, and a celebration of museums—all rolled into

One of the things L.A. art critic Ralph Rugoff says he most likes about the MJT is the way it deploys all the traditional signs of a museum's in- presentation, exhaustive captions, hushed lighting, and state-

"VISITING THE JURASSIC IS A BIT LIKE BEING IN PSYCHOANALYSIS," SAYS ANOTHER MUSEUM DIRECTOR. "IT'S A MARVELOUS FIELD FOR PROJECTION AND TRANSFERENCE"

of-the-art technical armature—all to subvert the very notion of the authoritative as it applies not only to itself but to any museum. The Jurassic misgiving— that proceed to infest all his other dealings with the culturally sacrosanct. "It's all very smart," Rugoff insists, "and very knowing." Very knowing, and yet at the same time utterly sincere. Rugoff told me how one day he sat alongside David's wife, Diana, at a lecture Wilson was giving at California State University at Los Angeles. This was an early version of his Sonnabend spiel, which, in fact, for a long time existed solely as a lecture, only relatively recently having taken on its exhibitional form. "And he did it completely straight," Rugoff recalls. "Everybody there was taking notes furiously, as if this were all on the level—the falls, the cones, the planes, the whole thing. It was amazing. And at point I leaned over to Diana and whispered, 'I ts the most incredible piece of performance ar ever seen.' And she replied, 'What makes think it's a performance? David *he* all this stuff.' "

As I say, I began making it a point to the museum on all of my trips to Los Angeles, each time David would be there manning desk, so that after a while I got to know him ty well—which is to say, it felt like I got past first layer of ironylessness to, well, maybe a ond layer of ironylessness. I don't know. O sionally we'd talk about his own life, and it' impression that everything he told me was r or less true-as-stated (or, anyway, whatever I c check/double-check out), although, as with som the displays, a wealth of solid detail early on gan to fog over, somewhat, as one approac the present.

Born in Denver in 1946, the middle of t well-loved sons of a doctor and his wife, D started frequenting the city's various muse from a very early age. I once asked him what first attracted him to museums, and he rep "Well, their museumness. How dark and hus they were inside, the oak-and-glass cases, sense of being in these repositories among those old things." But he was hardly a recl In fact, his mother recalls how in his early y he was enormously gregarious, extroverted, social—a regular party animal.

Then something happened, although Wi is loath to talk about it—he gets all shy and l itant (as opposed to rhet cally opaque) at the prosp "I really don't know if I war get into this," he says. "It's barrassing, and it's hard to into words without sounc insipid or grandiose. But si you ask . . . Sometime late in high school—I maybe seventeen or eighteen—my parents brothers were away for a week and I was home myself, when out of the blue, for no reason, I derwent this incredibly intense—well, like a c version experience. It's just that I came understand the course of my life and the me ing of life in general. Like that: as if in a flash. instance, I knew that there would be no purp for me in pursuing the world of acquisition. experience had religious overtones to it, but in any specific way. It was the most intense perience I've ever had—an entire week in awe euphoria. It was as if I was receiving instructi God, do I want to be talking like this? It's no much that it's embarrassing—I just don't wan be doing the forces behind it a disservice. Ar definitely don't want to claim any specialness

like something was being given to me—
where between a gift and an assignment—
one wants to be incredibly careful how one
s such things.

All at once it was made completely apparent
ne, though without any detail, how my life
ld have to follow the course that has led to
ell"—he gestured to the walls around him—
his. I mean, I see running this museum as a
[illegible] and that service [illegible]. I
t believe I'm saying these things—in pro-
ng people a situation . . . in fostering an en-
nment in which people can change. And it
pens. I've seen it happen.

But without a doubt, that task was laid out for
n those days. The general structure was clear,
g if it then took an extremely long time for
to be able to realize it, and that whole while
nsed myself waiting, stumbling around on
forest floor, confused—like that ant."

His mother confirms how somewhere late in
high-school years David changed, became
e serious—and she even lets on how, though
of course loves him both ways, maybe she
htly preferred his earlier incarnation: "He
a lot more fun as a party boy than as a Chi-
e philosopher."

Soon thereafter he enrolled at Michigan's
Kalamazoo College—a small, independent school
terned along the lines of Oberlin or Reed—
ere he ended up majoring in urban entomol-
with a minor in art. His first night there he
t Diana at a square-dance mixer. They be-
ne inseparable and were wed a few years lat-
in 1969, during the last weeks before their
duation. "Yeah," David acknowledges. "We've
n married for twenty-five years. It's amaz-
—and believe me, every bit as amazing to us.
ought to be in one of our vitrines. But she's
redible." He continues, the [illegible] just the slightest bit. "I can't believe how
puts up with all this."

After college, David and Diana moved to
icago, where almost immediately David was
ed up by his draft board. He applied for con-
ntious-objector status, which, he says, "was
nted in record time. They just looked at me
—no questions asked—I was like the dictio-
y definition." Following stints performing al-
native service as an orderly in various hospitals'
ntal and emergency wards, and then a few
rs with Diana in a remote Colorado mountain
in, David was accepted into the film program
the then newly opened California Institute
he Arts.

Cal Arts at the time was a hotbed for the
lest and most austere in formalist, avant-garde
nmaking, and David Wilson soon earned a
utation as one of the coolest, most austere
nmakers there. "Well," David admits today,
sort of thing that was moderately meaningful to a microscopically small percentage of the population at a particular moment. But clearly, in the end, it wasn't fulfilling the mandate I'd received." Diana says flatly, "Those films were not David."

David continued making his formalist films through the Seventies and into the early Eighties, and though he wasn't making any money off of them, he and Diana were nevertheless able [illegible] comfortable lifestyle because they were making so much money in the side doing highly sophisticated robotic special-effects [illegible] periphery of the film industry. "It was the sort of work you could do six months a year and easily coast the rest of the time," David says. "I even enjoyed it. Technically, it was quite challenging and interesting. But it wasn't the kind of work where you were adding beans to the right side of the scale."



His other life, however, was opening out. After 1980 he began making strange little dioramas on the side, exquisitely evocative miniature sensoriums, several of them featuring the same stereoscopic viewing device modeled on the catoptric (or so-called beam-splitting) camera that he'd subsequently deploy in his Iguassu Falls display. This was much closer to the mandate, as David quickly realized, and increasingly he began farming these cabinet-splendors out to various odd and far-flung venues.

And it's here that David's account begins to fog over. His own biography intermeshes with the museum's. The Thums make their appearance, via Mary Rose Cannon—and it's a bit difficult to achieve a strictly accurate chronological account, at least from him.

Diana, [illegible] day in 1984 she'd just finished a tai chi class when David drove over to get her. Pulling up, he waited for her to get in the car, at which point he passed her a slip of paper on which he'd scrawled the simple phrase "Museum of Jurassic Technology."

"What's this?" Diana asked him. "Your life's work?" And he just smiled

For [illegible] Museum of Jurassic Technology had no physical base of its own; it [illegible] "Collection" extended to scattered galleries, museums,

[illegible] Then one day, about
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

imes called *Wunderkammern*, wonder-cab-
—it occurred to me how the Museum of
ic Technology truly is their worthy heir
uch as wonder, broadly conceived, is its
ing theme. ("Part of the assigned task,"
I once told me, "is to reintegrate people to
er.") But it's a special kind of wonder, and
etastable. The visitor to the Museum of
sic Technology continually finds himself
nering between wondering-at (the marvels
ture) and wondering-whether (any of this
l possibly be true). And it's that very shim-
the capacity for such delicious confusion,
on sometimes seems to suggest, that may
itute the most blessedly wonderful thing
t being human.

ecently had occasion to raise the point with
Walsh, the director of the Getty Museum and
ner fan of the MJT. We were talking about
derkammern and some of the museum's oth-
recedents. "Most of the institutional-histor-
llusions at Wilson's museum turn out to be
" Walsh told me. "There *was* a Musaeum
escantianum and a John Tradescant—in fact
f them, an Elder and a Younger—who dur-
he 1600s built up a famously eclectic cabinet
n as 'The Ark' in Lambeth on the South
, in London, most of the contents of which
lved to Elias Ashmole, who expanded upon
and then donated the
e collection to Oxford
ersity, where it became
asis for the Ashmolean.
e was a Swammerdam,
here was an Olaus Worm
his Museum Wormianum;
Charles Willson Peale did have his museum
iladelphia, to which Benjamin Franklin do-
the carcass of an Angora cat and where you
also see a mastadon and mechanical de-
like the Eidophusikon, which showed prim-
movies. Ever since the late Renaissance,
sorts of collections got referred to as *Kunst-*
Wunderkammern. Technically, the term de-
es a collection of a type that has pretty much
peared today—with the exception, perhaps,
e Jurassic—where natural wonders were dis-
d alongside works of art and various man-
feats of ingenuity. It's only much later, in the
teenth century, that you see the breakup in-
parate art, natural-history, and technology
ums. But in the earlier collections, you had
vonders of God spread out there cheek by
with the wonders of man, both presented as
cts of the same thing, which is to say, the
der of God."

asked Walsh about some of the relics and
re curiosa that used to make it into those col-
ons right alongside the legitimate stuff: the
from the beard of Noah, the plank from the
Ark, the woman's horn. I mentioned how I always figured some of those early museum men must have been being ironical in including them.

"Well," Walsh said, "there's a whole big side industry in twentieth-century criticism that consists primarily of imputing irony to prior ages. But no, no, I don't think they were being ironical at all. They were in dead earnest."

I tried out on Walsh my notion about the metastability of wonder at the Jurassic, with its corollary about the deliciousness of that frisson between wondering-at and wondering-whether, and Walsh interrupted, "All that's true, that seems right to me, but you have to understand that that deliciousness is a distinctly contemporary taste. That's not even modern. Neither Cézanne nor Picasso would have related to it. That's 1980s, maybe even just the Nineties."

I was talking with David in the back room of the museum one afternoon on my most recent visit to L.A. It was a weekday—the museum was closed—and our conversation had turned to the subject of Hagop Sandaldjian, a Soviet-Armenian micro-miniaturist sculptor (who'd apparently actually existed, though he'd recently passed away) whose astonishing lifework, consisting of miniature renditions of subjects ranging from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs to Pope John Paul II painstakingly suspended in the eye of a needle, had been the subject of a recent retrospective at the Jurassic. Free-associating, I mentioned the cabalistic doctrine of the Thirty-Six Just Men—how at any given moment there are thirty-six ethically just men in the world, unknown, perhaps, even to themselves, without whose pillarlike solidity all of Creation could crumble. Maybe, I suggested, there are thirty-six *aesthetically* just men as well.

THE VISITOR TO THE MUSEUM SHIMMERS BETWEEN WONDERING-AT (THE MARVELS OF NATURE) AND WONDERING-WHETHER (ANY OF THIS COULD POSSIBLY BE TRUE)

David looked at me, authentically noncomprehending. "I don't understand the difference," he said.

He was quiet a few moments, and once again the ironylessness seemed momentarily to crack. "You know, certain aspects of this museum you can peel away very easily, but the reality behind, once you peel away those relatively easy layers, is more amazing still than anything those initial layers purport to be. The first layers are just a filter."

He was quiet another few moments, and just as surely I could sense that the crack was closing up once again, the facade of ironylessness reasserting itself inviolate.

have to batten things down, contrive mor
orous hypotheses and the experiments thr
which to check them out, everything all c
and careful. But that first take—those first
tasies. Those are the best. And that's the very
it your museum man appears to have capt
Good for him."

I decided to try the stink ant out on Ei
Wait until you hear this, I told him, this o
even funnier. Whereupon I proceeded to
him the first few paragraphs of this very p
right off my computer screen. He listene
tentively, audibly harrumphing his concurr
every few sentences. "Yup," he said. "Yup. Y
When I'd finished, he said, "So, where's the
All of that stuff is basically true."

I was struck almost speechless. Really? I s
mered.

"Oh, absolutely. I mean, I don't know
names exactly—they're not precisely my f
so I'm a little rusty on those ants. But let's
Megaloponera foetens, you say? I don't think M
loponera exists, but there is a genus that use
go by the name *Megaponera*, although—it g
little complicated—lately I'm told it's been
ed into another category called *Pachycon*
And there is an African ant called *Pachycon*
foetens is smelly, but *analis* is even
smelly. And I believe that that ant does str
late—it's not a cry exactly, but it does produce
faint chirping sound. As for whether a *Pa*
condylа ingests the spore that way, I'm not
But there are several other species that do, s
of them right here in the United States. Fo
stance, down in Florida there's an ant—C
ponotus floridanus—that inhales or any
somehow takes in spores of the *Cordyceps* fur
and occasionally you will indeed come upon th
ants, far from home, high up the stalk of some
blade of grass, for instance. Their mandibles
be clamped onto the blade and they'll be q
dead, a long, thin, curved, pink candlestick
protrusion growing out from their head.
that's the fungus, getting set to shed spores.
no," Eisner laughed, delighted. "That's all true.
goes to show: nature is incredible—no way, *no*
this could all have been created in just six da
(That was great: every bit as wonder-struc
Wilson, Eisner had derived exactly the oppo
evolutionary conclusion from the likes of
stink ant.) "In fact," he continued, "wait a sec
my wife, Maria, and I p
tographed one of those a while back dow
Florida. You got a fax?"

I gave him the number.

"Just a second," he said, and rang off.

And sure enough, just a few moments lat
photo of a dead *Camponotus floridanus*, his f
head gloriously rampant, came coursing up f
out of my machine.

"But at an other level," David continued, "we were drawn to that particular instance because it seemed so metaphorical. That's one of our mottoes

NATURE AS METAPHOR. I mean, there've been

ant impelled, as it possessed, to do things that defy all common sense. That ant is me. I couldn't have summed up my own life better if I'd made him up all by myself."

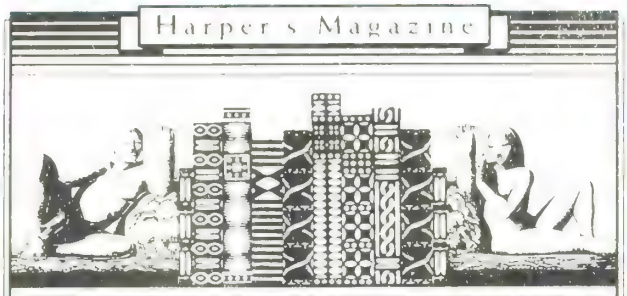
"But David," I wanted to say (and didn't). "*You did make him up all by your-*

Shortly after, back home in my office, I had a phone conversation about something entirely different with Tom Eisner, the eminent Cornell University biologist. In passing I mentioned Bernard Maston, the *deprong mon*, and Donald Griffith—"That's Griffin," Eisner interrupted, with an *i-n*, not a *t-h*." I know, I said, I know. "Funny about Griffin," Eisner continued. "He's a great scientist and a dear friend of mine. In fact, years ago, as a graduate student at Harvard, I inherited my first lab from him. There was still this wonderful weird grid of holes drilled into the walls, holes that had once held the anchors onto which he'd attached the maze of wires crisscrossing the room which formed the basis for his original research proving that bats could navigate in the dark. That lab had a marvelous history. Immediately before Griffin it had been occupied by Alfred Kinsey, the entomologist who did such terrific groundbreaking work on reproduction among the cynipid wasps—that is, before he abandoned the field entirely to concentrate on human sexuality instead."

least bit miffed. "That's exactly what it's like when you're out there in the field and you're first encountering some of those marvelously strange natural adaptations. At first all you've got is a few bisected pieces of raw observation, the slightest glimpses, but you let your mind go,

the most fanciful life cycles. In a way it's my favorite part of being a scientist—later on, sure, you

Harper's Magazine



NOTABLE TITLES

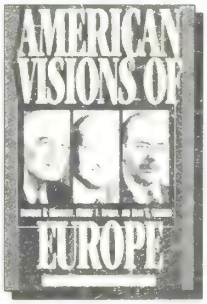
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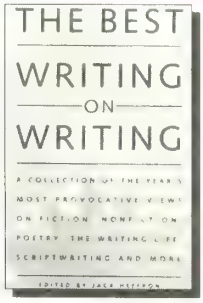


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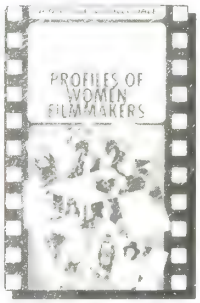
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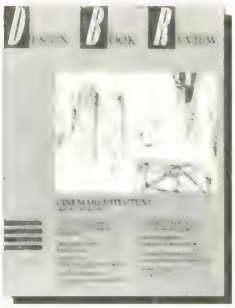


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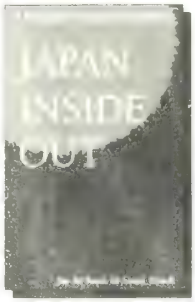




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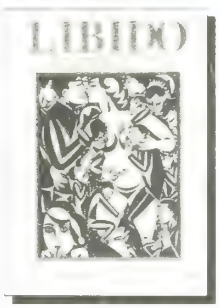


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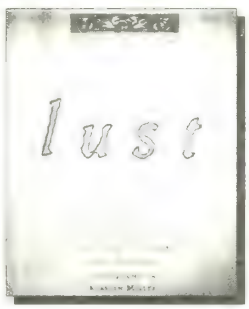


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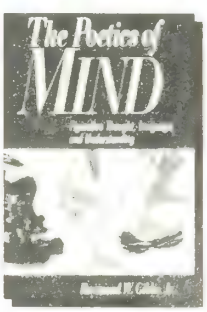
rges."—*Chicago Tribune*. Sample, $7.



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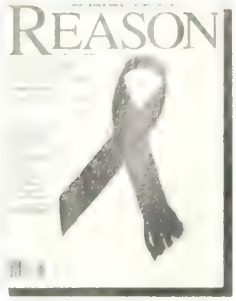


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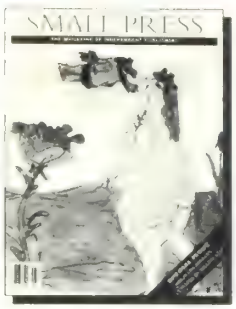
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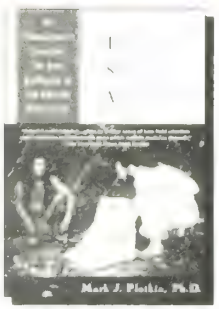


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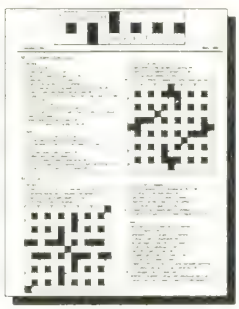
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My mother died of breast [illegible]
[illegible]
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clearly what she expected. What was disconcerting was my fierce recital of verses, my vigilant posture on the edge of the red plastic kindergarten

The arena of faith was the only one in which I felt I had a chance of securing my mother's attention. Since she was not around during the week to

and since she was always someone who preferred the choice morsel, it was to my mother rather than to my grandparents that the guidance of my

after church, we went to a nearby patio restaurant, where we sat in curlicued wrought-iron chairs and reviewed my Sunday-school lesson while

with fancy toothpicks. The waiters flirted with my mother, and men at neighboring tables smiled in her direction. They looked at her left hand, which had no ring. They seemed to share my longing for my mother—who already embodied for me the beauty of youth, who had the shiny-haired, smooth-cheeked vitality my grandparents did not have, who could do backbends and cartwheels and owned high-heeled shoes in fifteen

cious for her elusiveness.

I grew impatient with *Key to the Scriptures*, and in order to re-experience the ecstatic rise that had for an instant come through the experience of pain, I began secretly—and long before I had the example of any saint—to practice the mortification of my flesh.

turned his vise on my finger joints. When my grandmother brought home ice cream from Baskin-Robbins and

was packed, I used salad tongs to retrieve the small, smoking slab from the trash can. In the privacy of the upstairs bathroom, I touched my tongue to the dry ice's surface and left a little of its skin there. I looked in the mirror at the blood coming out of my mouth, at the same magic flow that

the impossibly wide world of gr
ups and traffic and d
ered her to my side.

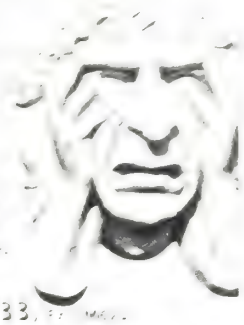
My mother converte
Catholicism when I was ten,
followed in her wake, seekin
that she had not found in Chri
Science. We had failed at ever
most basic of Mrs. Eddy's tenets,
medical doctors. At first we wen
ly for emergencies, like the acc
veloped an ulcer and I, never ir
lated, got tetanus from a scra
physical collapses stubbornly
fected by our attempts to disbelie
them.

In preparation for my first C
munion, I was catechized by a p
named Father Dove. Despite th
licitous name, Father Dove wa
the Holy Spirit incarnate: he cl
smoked and his face over his
collar had a worldly, sanguine
Worse, I suspected that my m
was in love with him. She fell i
easily. One Saturday I made my
confession (that I had been ru
my grandmother and had taken
dollars from her purse), and the
day I took Communion with el
other little girls dressed in wi
from that time forward I atte
mass in a marble sanctuary filled
gilt angels.

Light came through the sta
glass windows and splashed c
over everything. A red circle fo
my mother's white throat. In
roiled around us, and I looked
to compare the shiny toes of my
patent-leather shoes with th
hers. When we left, lining up to
Father Dove's hand, I was al
study the faces around me and
firm that my mother's wide haze
her long nose, and high, white
anyone else.

For Christmas the following
received, in my stocking, a box
of four volumes of *Lives of the Sai*
tended for children. There wer
volumes of male saints, which
once, flipping through the onio
pages, and then left in my dresser

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dread Sunday lunches with my m
er, who fastidiously observed my
in its ascension to
mouth.

Saint Catherine was fourteen
her older sister Bonaventura di
childbirth. Catherine blamed h
for her sister's death. She believed
had punished her and Bonaven
because Catherine had let her bi
ter tempt her into using cosmetic
curling her hair—because she h
Bonaventura's example convince
briefly, that a woman could em
both heavenly and earthly desire

Whatever buoyancy, what
youthful resilience, Saint Cath
had had disappeared when she los
sister. She became uncomprom
in turning away from all worldly th
from food, from sleep, from men.
mother, Lapa, a volatile woman w
choleric screams were reputedly so
that they frightened passersb
Siena's Via dei Tintori, redouble
efforts to marry her uncooper
twenty-fourth child. Some acc
hold that Catherine's intended g
was Bonaventura's widowed hust
a foul-tongued and occasionally br
man. Catherine refused; she had
ago promised herself to Christ.
cut off her hair and fasted, eatin
ly bread and uncooked vegetables
began to experience ecstasies, an
recorded that when she did she
fered a tetanic rigor in her limbs
Lapa would lift her daughter fro
floor where she had fallen and al
break the girl's bones as she tri
bend her stiff arms and legs.

Though it had been ten years
my mother moved out, she had y
find a place that suited her fo
length of time, and so she receive
mail at the more permanent addr
her parents and would stop by
work to pick it up. She came in
back door, cool and perfumed an
peccably dressed, and she drifted
the kitchen to find me in my run
school uniform, standing befor
open refrigerator. One day I tu
around with a cold chicken leg i
hand. My mother had tossed he
opened bills on the counter and
slowly rereading the message ins
greeting card decorated with a
ing of two lovesick rabbits locked

mbrace. She smiled slightly—a
and felt consciously mysterious
—and kept the content of the
verted from my eyes. When she
ad her till of it, she looked up at
he said nothing but let her eyes
r a moment on the meat in my
then she looked away from it,
ne. She did not need to speak to
e of her disapproval, and by now
abitual response to my mother had
ne one of despair: muffled, mute,
tumbling. But in that moment
she looked away from me, hope
ss gave way before a sudden, vi
ry elation. I dropped the drumstick
he garbage can. The mouthful I
wallowed stopped in its descent.
felt it, gelid and vile inside me as
hed the sheen of grease from my
rs. At dinnertime, after my moth
d left for her apartment, I pleaded
much homework to allow time to
t the table, and I took my plate
the kitchen to my bedroom and
ed the window, dropping the food
into the dark foliage of the
bushes below.

When I was fifteen my mother
ok the parish to which we be
ed, and we began to attend one of
w Los Angeles churches that of
Latin mass. It was a romantic
ce, I believe, one that justified
er the long and mostly silent drive
ok each Sunday. During the eel
ion of the Eucharist, the priest
d place the Communion wafer
y tongue. I withdrew it into my
h carefully, making the sign of
ross over myself. Back in the pew
lt and lay my head in my arms in
mblance of devotion, stuck out
ongue, and pushed the Host
r into my sleeve. I was a little
l of going to hell, very afraid of
owing bread. My rules had grown
mexorable than the Church's
alone could save me. But the
was the Host, and I could not
g myself to throw it away. So I
it in my sock drawer with my
relics: a small fetish of my moth
air, stolen strand by strand from
airbrush she kept in her purse
ve pencil from that same source
tiny cookies from a Christmas
ing long past, a gingerbread boy
girl, no taller than an inch. A red

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Jerusalem

Whose city—whose "holy city" is it?

It's twenty-seven years, since Israel's victory in the Six-Day War, that the city of Jerusalem has been reunited under Israeli rule. It was understood that Jerusalem was Israel's undivided capital. But now, in the context of the peace negotiations with the Palestinians—unwittingly buoyed by the accomodating attitude of the current Israeli government—the status of Jerusalem has once more become the object of discussion.

What are the facts?

A city of many nationalities. Before the end of the 1967 Six-Day War, during which the Israeli Defense Forces reconquered Jerusalem from the Jordanians, claims to Jerusalem being a Moslem holy city were rarely, if ever asserted. Jerusalem had always been a city in which many religions and nationalities lived side by side. It was only after the old city was back in Jewish hands that the Moslem Arabs declared their willingness to wage "jihad" (holy war) to bring the city back into Arab possession.

The notion to call Jerusalem an Islamic holy city has only come about in modern times, especially after the Arabs lost the city in the Six-Day War. It now has gained currency by dint of constant repetition. The basis for the claim is that Jerusalem does indeed contain an Islamic holy site, namely the Temple Mount (sacred to both Jews and Moslems) with its two mosques. It is the place from which Mohammed is believed to have ascended to heaven. Mohammed never set foot in Jerusalem. But aware that it was the holy city of Jews and Christians, and wishing to convert them to his new religion, he commanded his followers to build a mosque in Jerusalem. But never in Moslem history did this mosque compare in significance to those in the Moslem holy cities of Mecca and Medina—cities that no "infidel" may visit.

A tenuous Moslem claim. It's on the basis of this religious tradition that the Moslems designated the entire Jewish Temple Mount to be their holy site. All Israeli governments, in their constant spirit of accommodation to Moslem sensibilities, have largely acceded to this tradition and have put the area in and around the two mosques entirely under Moslem control. But how would Christians feel if, instead of from the Temple Mount, Moslem tradition had Mohammed ascend from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and if the Moslem Arabs were to claim that site as their property? The Christian world, often ready to consent to Moslem claims against Jews and Israelis, would be greatly astonished and would certainly resist such claim. But Moslem Arab assertiveness doesn't end there. They have construed a claim to the entire city of Jerusalem (or at least to its eastern part where they have declared to be their "third holiest city" and the capital of their proposed state. And it would be an insult to all Moslems to leave the city in the hands of the "infidel Jews".

> "Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years."

Jerusalem: never an Arab capital. But the city of Jerusalem—in contrast to Baghdad, Cairo, and Damascus—has never played any major role in the political and religious lives of the Moslem Arabs. It was never a political center, never a national or even a provincial or sub-provincial capital of any country since biblical times. It was the site of one Moslem holy place, but otherwise a backwater to the Arabs. The passion for Jerusalem was not discovered by the Moslem Arabs until most recent history.

Jews are not the usurpers in Jerusalem. They have been living there since the Biblical era and have been the majority population since the 19th century. Jews have holy sites in most cities of the world. But do they claim sovereignty over those cities because of it? Of course not! It would be preposterous. And the Moslem Arab claim to Jerusalem, based on the mosques on the Temple Mount, is just as untenable. Jerusalem has been the center of Jewish life, of Jewish yearning, and of Jewish thinking for over 3000 years. That is the reason that the State of Israel has rededicated the Jewish holy city to be its indivisible capital.

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leather collar from my cat, which [illegible] died.

I still had my little books of th[e] male saints. I looked at them be[fore] bedtime some nights, stared at t[he] little portraits, at bleeding hands [and] feet, at exultant faces tipped u[p] heaven. But I read longer hagio[g]phies now, grown-up ones. W[hen] Catherine was twenty-four she e[x]rienced a mystical death. "My soul loosed from the body for those hours," she told her confessor, recorded that her heart stopped b[ea]ing for that long. Though she did want to return to her flesh, Jesus [let] her go back. But henceforth, she not as other mortals; her flesh changed and unfit for worldly liv[ing]. From that time forward she swallo[wed] nothing she did not vomit. Her [ha]piness was so intense that she lau[ghed] in her fits of ecstasy; she wept laughed at the same time.

I began to lose weight and wat[ched] with exultation as my bones emer[ged]. I loved my transformed self. I c[ould] not look at myself enough, and I [nev]er went into the bathroom that I [did] not find myself helplessly undres[sing] before the mirror. I touched m[y] too. At night I lay in bed and felt [my] jutting rib, felt sternum and hipb[ones], felt my sharp jaw and with my fi[nger] traced the orbit of my eye. Like Ca[th]ine's, mine was not a happiness others understood, for it was the j[oy] a private, inhuman triumph and universe—my body—utterly su[b]gated to my will.

My life was solitary, as befits a [re]gious. Too much of human fellow[ship] was dictated by taking meals in [com]pany, and what I did and did not [con]sume separated me from others. S[ince] I had not yet weaned myself [com]pletely from human needs, I drank [cof]fee, tea, and Tab. I ate raw vegeta[bles], multivitamins, No Doz, and, wh[en] felt very weak, tuna canned in w[ater]. When I climbed stairs I saw stars. with my grandparents when I [was] forced to, but the mask of compli[ance] was temporary, and upstairs, in [the] bathroom, I vomited what I had e[aten]. *This will make you pure*, I used to t[hink] when I made myself throw up. I [took] ipecac, the emetic kept in first-aid that causes a reeling, sweaty na[usea] that made me wish I were dead.

grandmother and grandfather,
o and seventy-one at my birth,
ow so old that their failing
granted me freedom unusual for
ger. Going blind, they did not
thinness. Deaf, they never
e in my bathroom. By the time
ixteen, they depended on my
license for their groceries, and
e to the supermarket I would
the mall. "Where did you go,
zoo?" my grandmother would
en I returned, trying to under-
hy I was hours late. Sometimes
cused me of secretly meeting
ne used the word "assignation."
ad always spent my time alone.
department stores I went from
rack, garment to garment: size
ze two, size two. Each like a
bead: another recitation, an-
confirmation of my size, one
urn of the key in the lock of

ing conquered hunger, I began
p, and one night, in my room,
te, and in the delusional frenzy
ing remained awake for nearly
y-three hours, I began to weep
hat I thought was joy. It seemed
that I had almost gotten there:
sh was almost utterly turned to
Soon I would not be mortal;
would be as invulnerable as
ne who could drink pus and see

next day, however, I fainted
ffered a seizure that left me un-
r a day to move the fingers on
ht hand. In the same hospital
I had long ago attacked the ER
with my fingernails, I had an
encephalogram and a number of
tests, which proved inconclu-
different nurse, a different doc-
different wing of the hospital.
thing had changed: my mother
was making a phone call
in the corridor.

ollege gave me the opportunity
e home, and I recovered par-
At heart, I wanted to believe in
ent life, and I stopped going to
nd gained a little weight. I wore
other's clothing, castoffs and
er I could steal from her, articles
led the reliquary of my pecu-
h. I zipped and buttoned myself
r garments as if they could cloak

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HAZELDEN

I wore the skirt twice, and when it fell from the hanger I let it remain on the dark, dirty floor of my closet. When my mother called me again, I decided to return it, but there was a stain on the waistband that the dry cleaner could not remove. For an hour I sat on my dorm bed with the skirt in my lap, considering. Finally I washed [illegible] turned the skirt to my mother's closet when invited, during spring break, for dinner at her apartment. *Please*, I begged silently, tucking it between two other skirts. *Please don't say anything more about it. Please.* When she called me late that night at my grandparents' house, I hung up on her. Then I went into the bathroom, [illegible] wept.

A[illegible] loved me and how good a daughter I had always been. I had faith that my mother was waiting until then to tell me that all along she had known I had performed impossible feats of self-alchemy.

After the funeral I packed up her [illegible] apartment and looked through all her papers for a note, a letter left for me and sealed in an envelope. I closed my [illegible] pen rendition of *Kathryn* on [illegible] my stationery. When I didn't find that I looked for clues to her affection. I read what correspondence she had [illegible] cats' flea baths, and on

to become an atheist. I frankly looked forward to the sterile sanity of it, to [illegible] not not believe. The habit of faith, though long focused misguidedly on a mortal object, persisted, and after a few years I found myself returning to the [illegible] extended mass. Having relearned to eat earthly food, now I practiced swallowing the Eucharist.

Rapture, too, returned. Long after I had stopped expecting it, it overcame me on a number of otherwise unnoteworthy occasions. I excused this as a fancy born of longing, as an endorphin effect brought on by exercise or pain, as craziness, pure and simple. But none of these described the experience, that same searing, light-filled, ecstatic rise, neither pleasant nor unpleasant, for no human measure applied to what I felt: transcendence. For the first time, I entrusted my spiritual evolution to some power outside my self and my will. If I were going to reach any new plane, any enlightenment, it would have to be God who transported me.

In the [illegible] months of her life, Catherine lost the use of her legs. Her biographers record that for years she had lived on little more than water [illegible] chewing, not swallowing, bitter herbs. In church one night, when she was too weak to approach the altar, the Communion bread came to her. Witnesses saw the bread move through the air unassisted. Catherine saw it carried by the hand of Christ.

[illegible] age as her bridegroom at His death. [illegible] venerated from behind an iron grille [illegible] erva, so that the throngs who came would not tear her to bits, each trying to secure a wonder-working relic.

All I have left of my mother are a box of books, a china dog, two cashmere sweaters with holes in the elbows, a few photographs, and her medical records. Among the last of these is her final chest X ray, and just over the shadow cast by the saint's medal she wore on a thin gold chain. No matter how many times the technicians ask to remove it, she would not. No ago, I unpacked the box of m records and retrieved the X ray. it before a light once more, trying the image more clearly, but of c could make out nothing. Just a white circle of brightest light—a blocking the view of the chaml her heart, a circle too bright to any vision.

I cannot now remember w saint's image she wore, but I ha cided that the medal, now wi mother in her coffin, bears a lil of Saint Jude. I have given my er to this saint—the patron causes, the patron of last resort as, long ago, she gave me to th of her choosing.

September Index Sources

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MY LAST COBRA

Stalking the wild prevarication

By George Plimpton



he trouble began on a watching expedition to and the mountain king- of Bhutan a year and a go when I developed an rated bursitis condition left elbow. Fortunately, a r was on the expedition, he evening he lanced my which looked as though g-Pong ball had been in- in it. But the relief was temporary. When we out of the Black Moun- of Bhutan, my arm had en to such proportions was forced to loosen my strap a couple of holes.

e Adventist Hospital in Bangkok, bow, now almost the size of a ball, was lanced again by my r friend.

k in New York the elbow was d yet again and my arm set in a nd a sling. Around town, when what was wrong, I replied, "Oh, aggravated bursitis condition. ng serious."

en I made a mistake. It occurred ocktail party given by Alexander cellor, then the editor of the Talk Town department of *The New* . The usual inquiries were being about my arm. I thanked those sked and said it was nothing to about—a simple aggravated bur- ondition. Sometimes, if they stayed around, I talked about the cranes we'd seen in India—the rare Siberian, and the Sarus cranes that stand as tall as a man. If the guests stared at my arm in its sling, I talked about the low medical costs in Thailand. (The cost of the facilities given my doctor for the procedure, including nurses, syringes, antibiotics, a sling, and a safety pin to hold it: $40.)

About midway through the party I caught sight of Jason Epstein standing by the door putting on his coat to leave. He is a senior editor at Random House. He called out, "Hey, George, what's wrong with your arm?"

Suddenly, it seemed too boring to give the usual answer. So somewhat to my own astonishment I found myself saying over the chatter of the party: "Well, Jason, the damnedest thing. I was lying in some tall grass at the Bharatpur Reserve, peering at a pair of Sarus cranes through my binoculars, when I sensed some movement to my left. I turned, raised my arm, and was bitten in the elbow by a small cobra!"

Jason's eyes widened. "My God!" he exclaimed. His date, standing beside him, said, "Hey, Jason, we're late!" and before I could admit I was joshing him she had propelled him out the door.

My immediate reaction was one of dismay. Jason is a familiar and popular figure at various social and publishing functions and watering holes around the city. It was inevitable that the cobra story would quickly get about.

Two days later the phone rang, and a man I didn't know came on. "Hey," he said. "I was having lunch with Elizabeth Sifton, the editor at Farrar, Straus & Giroux, today, and [illegible] that you've been bitten by a cobra." By the most extraordinary coincidence, it turned out that [illegible] doctor of considerable reputation, formerly the head of New York City's Roosevelt Hospital [illegible] poisons and toxins, including snake venoms. He would be most pleased if I could have lunch with him to discuss what had happened.

[illegible] been the appropriate time for me to admit that I had been kidding about the cobra. Instead, my heart pounding and my face reddening, I told the doctor that it had been a *small* cobra, really nothing, that my recovery had been swift, without complications, not much to report . . .

"Oh no!" the doctor said, insisting that anything I could tell him about the

Plimpton is the editor of The Paris Re- *He is the author of the novel* The Cu- Case of Sidd Finch *and a number of most of them with a sports background* ng Paper Lion, The Bogey Man, *and* -Factor.



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have lunch with him in three or four weeks—setting a considerable period of time so that in the interim he might forget that we had a date. We chatted [illegible] sounded as though he could hardly wait for our lunch.

It was the first of a number of calls, enough to make me realize the situation had truly gotten out of hand. I decided to explain matters to my [illegible] She is active in New York social circles—[illegible] soon enough she would hear that her son had been bitten by a cobra.

So we had lunch. She noticed my arm sling but didn't seem especially curious about it.

"Mother," I said. "You're going to hear about this arm of mine . . . that I've been bitten on the elbow by a small cobra." I waited a beat. I couldn't resist it. "Mother, it's true."

"Stuff and nonsense," she said. "You have an aggravated bursitis condition."

Astonished, I asked, "How do you know?"

"Why, I saw your doctor at a concert two evenings ago," she said. "You might have told me when you got back from India," she went on reproachfully. "It's awkward to hear about such things from others."

The next day my sister called. "Hey!" she said. "I hear you've been bitten by a cobra on the elbow."

"Who told you that?"

"Mother," she said.

It turns out that my mother rather liked the cobra-bite story. I could imagine her sitting down at the bridge table, shuffling the cards, and getting ready to tell her friends, which she does by clearing her throat to get attention.

The cobra story was not only hers to tell. It got into the newspapers. New York's *Daily News* had an item in its gossip column. One paper reported that I was recovering in a hospital in Nairobi, Kenya, from a dangerous cobra bite suffered while on safari in [illegible]

went on, the cobra experience [illegible] to become not only clear in my [illegible] but secure, as if it had actually [illegible] pened. I could almost smell the [illegible] grass on which I was lying, the [illegible] the earth against my belly, the [illegible] movement of something off to m[illegible] "Oh yes," I would say when aske[illegible] variably emphasizing that it had [illegible] a *small* cobra. To my shame, I fe[illegible] qualms about perpetuating th[illegible] truth. After all, I reasoned, it wa[illegible] out over the wire. The item was [illegible] tucked away in countless news[illegible] files, perhaps to re-emerge a[illegible] demise: MAN WHO SURVIVED C[illegible] BITE DIES.

The only individual I promised [illegible] self to come clean with was the d[illegible] from Roosevelt Hospital. He had [illegible] phoned a few times since his las[illegible] and had not forgotten our lunch [illegible] date. Worried about his reaction, [illegible] the inspired thought to have our [illegible] on April Fools' Day, hoping th[illegible] would accept what I had done i[illegible] spirit of that occasion. My plan [illegible] to lead him on throughout most [illegible] meal . . . until the coffee, say, at w[illegible] point I would lean forward and, in [illegible] sly, unctuous manner of the pra[illegible] jokester about to break the new[illegible] the doctor if he realized what [illegible] was.

To prepare for our meeting, I [illegible] up the Bronx Zoo to speak to son[illegible] in the herpetology departmen[illegible] find out what *does* happen to s[illegible] one bitten by a cobra.

The scientist was very forthco[illegible] "There's probably a burning sens[illegible] where the cobra bit," he said, "[illegible] gling up the arms, on the lips, a[illegible] as evasive saliva . . ."

"Evasive saliva?"

"Drooling, if you will. There [illegible] been reports of euphoria . . . ha[illegible] nations, and, of course, local [illegible] ropathy, especially around the [illegible] area. That is how people die fr[illegible] cobra bite—the neural system [illegible] works the lungs fails."

"The euphoria does not last [illegible] long time."

"Absolutely not."

"Anything else?"

The scientist paused. "It ap[illegible] [illegible] seems scattered." He [illegible] "Green leaves in a tree might a[illegible]

d Vision is likely to be limited
ase, all this depends on the
ty of the bite . . ."

scientist didn't ask me why I
the information I had planned
him I was working on a murder
in which a cobra is dropped
a trapdoor into a victim's bath-
ing was becoming appallingly
do.

doctor and I had lunch at a
wn club. We sat at a window
or two. He was a large man, with
so friendly that I winced think-
hat was going to happen to it
he news sank in.

ough the doctor had never trav-
Africa or Asia, continents with
horа of cobras and other poi-
s snakes, it turned out that he
ne foremost authority in New
City on snakebites. "As a con-
nt to the City Department of
h, I'm okayed only for snakes,"
d me. "It's not kosher for me to
e bites by hoghish, poison frogs,
y other deadly critters. Only
s."

had plenty to keep him busy. He
would be surprised how many
eur collectors would take "diffi-
snakes out of their herpetoriums
how they'd get along on the liv-
oom carpet. He described a bag-
handler at JFK airport who,
ng a mild turmoil in a mail sack,
one over to investigate and had
bitten by a king cobra through
anvas.

Wow!"

stonishing to think you can order
s through the mail," the doctor
You can find advertisements for
magazines like *Field and Stream*.
s an interesting case. A woman
t a leather coat that had been
in Okinawa. She developed a
e pain in the arm, and it turned
ne had been bitten by a kind of
copperhead—a habu, it's called."
what?"

habu. It apparently was living
lining of the coat."

Wow!" I said for the second time.
long do you think the habu was
ere?"

uite a while, I would judge." The
r smiled. "These creatures are
self-sufficient. We had a case of
one who decided to help a cot-
n mouth shed its skin. They've been
home successfully for 300 million
years. The kid thought the creature
needed help and got bitten for his
pains. Isn't that a beauty?"

By the time we'd finished the main
course, the doctor had described a
number of other instances, including
an encounter between a biology teach-
er "who should have known better"
and a saw-scaled viper, a Middle East-
ern "creature."

"When this viper moves," the doc-
tor explained, "its scales slide one over
the other, which makes a quite dis-
tinctive sound . . . rather like the sound
of Wheaties being crushed between
the fingers, though, mind you, that's
not a scientific description."

The doctor took a sip of water. He
continued: "Anyway, that's why the
biology teacher had this creature—an
auditory pleasure for him—and when
he poked it into motion so he could lis-
ten to it, it *got* him. Caused a severe
blood disorder. Almost killed him."

"Wow!"

As the dessert arrived, the doctor
leaned back in his chair, joined his
fingers in a steeple, and asked me to tell
him about my cobra. I cleared my
throat. "Well, doctor, I was lying in
some grass looking through my binoc-
ulars at a Sarus crane when I sensed
some movement to my left and was
bitten in the point of the elbow by
this small cobra."

We discussed what kind of cobra it
was.

"Small," I said. "Really quite small.
You don't suppose it could have been
a krait."

"Oh no," the doctor said. "Hardly
possible. Almost undoubtedly, con-
sidering the area, a spectacled cobra."

I thought of the distinctive eye pat-
tern on the back of that particular
species' hood and shivered slightly as
I reached for a corn muffin.

"And then?" The doctor's eyes glis-
tened behind his glasses.

"I didn't run."

"Capital!" It turned out as our con-
versation progressed that "capital"
(along with "creature" or "critter") was
a favorite expression.

I continued: "My friend Peter
Matthiessen was a half mile down the
spillway, hoping to spot the Siberian
crane out there in the marsh. Not

Harper's [illegible] contributor [illegible] on winning the [illegible] Award for National Reporting for "The Last Shot," the April 1995 *Harper's* story.

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[illegible] could have done anyw

"Of course not."

"So I sat down on a sort of [illegible] took off the moleskin shirt wearing. I looked at my elbow could see that the bite was not so a puncture as a small tear. Ther discomfort, as if acid had been spl on the wound, but this was cou [illegible]te!" I gulped slightly. "by a feeling of . . . what? . . . Exaltation phoria? . . ."

"Capital!" the doctor explode

"Then I noticed something curious. The leaves—"

"Yes, the leaves," the doctor j jected.

"—the leaves on the trees ove had turned reddish, a kind of at nal color. Quite odd."

"Oh, this is truly splendid,' the doctor. The reason for hi citement—he went on to expl was that a long-standing disagree exists about the working of cobr son on the human system. The tion is whether it works its w the brain stem and affects the br self. Many authorities belie doesn't, that it simply does its da below the neck. My descripti the discolored leaves supporte doctor's hypothesis that the brai involved.

"Go on," he said eagerly.

I couldn't bring myself to tel that sitting there on the knoll begun to drool. Besides, the ti was perfect for me to lean forwar let him in on the gag. All I had was to remark somewhat rogu "Hey, doctor, do you know wha it is?"

I could not bring myself to d have wondered since why I di [illegible]tess up. Perhaps it was because I t that, at what Aristotle referred to "moment of recognition," the d would rear up out of his chai grieved, with a terrible howl that turn heads in the august and sub atmosphere of that midtown [illegible]ub.

The other possibility was mor setting: that I simply could not let I truly liked the fact that my m was spreading the story at her b meetings: "One spade. Have you what's happened to my son?"

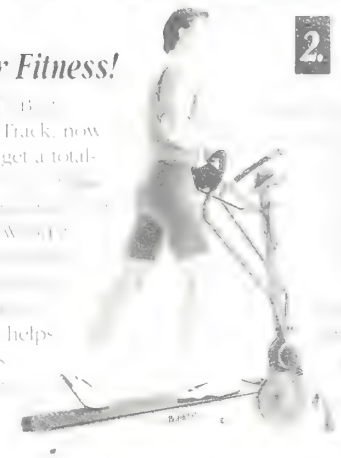
I can't recall much more abou

n other than the palpable delight
loctor showed on being told I
about the chameleonlike
leaves.

lmost a year to the day after our
Fools' lunch at the club, I got a let-
om the doctor. He said he was writ-
long essay or perhaps a short book
his experiences with serious
ebite in an urban setting. Could
se my experience as an anecdote?
mmably he was going to enlist my
ence to support his views on the
t of cobra poison on the brain. I
d at the letter, appalled.
ventually, a solution came to mind.
uld write an account of everything
had happened: the bursitis condi-
in Bhutan, the arm in the sling,
cocktail party where I'd sprung the
a-bite story on Jason Epstein, my
ner's reaction, the call from the doc-
—all this in careful detail, including
rsh look at my own lapses of judg-
t. When it was all typed up and
n a title ("My Last Cobra") I'd send
f to the doctor, making sure that it
o him at some point on April 1. It
rred to me that it might be wise to
l a bouquet of roses along as well.
ll that was required was an enve-
and some stamps. I had the good
or's address. And yet there was
curious reluctance to let it go.
at greater substantiation of what
pened to me in the sedge grass at
Bharatpur Reserve than to have
ce of it in an essay published, say,
distinguished medical journal! I
tempted to send the doctor a wire:
ll means use what you wish stop de-
ed to contribute to medical knowl-
stop please send copies of article when
ished—this last so I could carry
pings from it around in my wallet
ring out at suitable occasions.
did send the package, of course. In
days following I expected the doc-
o write or call—either to express
grin or, I hoped, to admit he'd been
ed but no harm done. A month
t by. Then another. An eerie si-
ce. I don't dare call. I have been
ding the club where we had lunch.
package arrives in the mail, I shake
ghtly to make sure that from with-
don't hear a hiss, or a rattle, or, es-
ally, the sound of Wheaties being
hed between the fingers . . . ■

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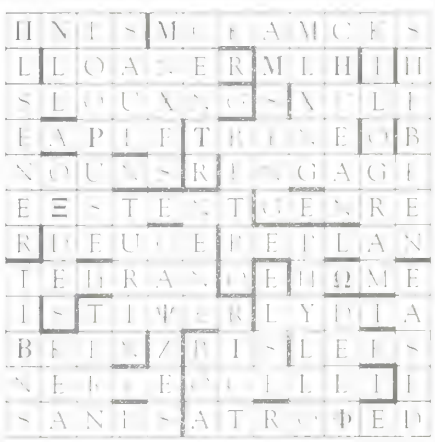
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LETTERS

Continued from page 6

...its purpose. In education, and quinte... ...tially in public education, "qua... ...takes on an urgent social dimens... ...Connecticut's mandatory talk is for... ...this kind of conclusion.

I am hopeful for another rea... More and more citizens in Conn... ...cut, from diverse political and cu... ...al persuasions, are convinced ... ...public education in the state is ur... ...serving everyone and that all sch... ...need improvement. While the di... ...ities between rich and poor sch... ...suburban and urban schools, are ... ...found and in the inner city often ... these problems are part of a larger ... ...tern of educational insufficiency ... threatens the future welfare of th... ...tire state. Our mandatory talk ha... ...to both a keener awareness of t... ...problems and to a deeper unders... ...ing of the context in which the... ...embedded—the need to mak... schools better. That by itself ma... solve Connecticut's educational ... lems, but if we don't learn the le... we will insure our failure.

When courts mandate change ... ...zens often grumble that, had they ... given a proper chance, *they* could ... done it better. How curious that in ... ...necticut, where so many of our d... ...cratic principles found early nur... the three branches of governmen... ...erating at times in contentious ... ...pendence and aloof isolation, ... conspired, so to speak, to give ... ...necticut's citizens, at the grass root... ...el, a proper chance. Will we tak... advantage of it? Who knows. B... must remember that the play's no ... yet and that the judge in *Sheff*, th... *ex machina*, has not yet rendered ... ...cision and is still waiting in the w...

Edgar F. Beckham, Chair
Connecticut State Board of Educ...
Hartford, Conn.

Remember the Victim

I am absolutely mortified that ... Blaustein was unable to find gri... remorse among the citizens of Hunt... Texas ["Witness to Another E... tion," May], home of the state's ... chamber. But if Blaustein is gen... interested in seeing old-fashione...

nd uncontrollable weeping, she
try a short walk behind the cas-
yet another innocent victim
rlessly butchered by a "poor and
lerstood" criminal.

Laughable to see a savage killer
easily applied capital punish-
to others grovel for mercy and
decry capital punishment as in-
ne and unfair. My brother was
ed 181 times; the woman with
23 times. He and the woman are
in cold graves while the mur-
rests comfortably in a warm cell,
led with color TV, books, and
meals a day. As the criminals
to their new lifestyle, we, the vic-
family, struggle with unpaid bills
nd ourselves being told by friends
mething good will surely come of
ved one's death. And through all
ars, we see an uncaring justice
bestow more rights and privi-
on murderers than helpless fami-
er dreamed possible.

urholm
ll, Wash.

D Hell

ad Vince Passaro's article on his
ncounter with managed health
On the Examining Table," May]
ascination, especially the sec-
n insurance companies punish-
heir doctors for referrals to
lists. In 1986 I was taken to a
al for a bleeding ulcer. My HMO
n't pay for an operating room, so
t five hours in emergency while
edical staff tried to stop the
ng with transfusions and injec-
At 3 A.M. I was taken to a hos-
xty miles away. There the needle
ent continued. I was never op-
on, but the bleeding eventual-
pped. With that much work
ing needles, blood contamina-
ecomes almost a sure thing. Af-
d, my blood bank would pay for
e pints of blood.

k home again, I went to my
doctor for a checkup. Blood
howed that I was suffering from
dysfunction of some kind. The
didn't run any further tests nor
tell me of my liver trouble nor
e refer me to a specialist. Six
later I discovered I had hepati-
possibly hepatitis B, and trans-
fusion jaundice that was causing the liver trouble. In 1988 I was still with the same HMO but seeing a different doctor. Signs of chronic hepatitis began to show; joint pain, irritability and fatigue, but I thought I was just getting old. On my last trip to my HMO doctor in October 1988, I was given Tagamet for "abdominal pains." He knew of the hepatitis—he had the results of the tests done in 1986—but didn't tell me what was going on. Later, he would give me incomplete medical records, omitting the part when I'd first come to him from the other HMO doctor.

In January 1991 I awoke one morning with a swollen abdomen, dizziness, and ears buzzing. I couldn't go to work. I went to bed, but didn't get better. I applied for Social Security in May of 1991. I was out of money, had no insurance, and had been turned down by welfare. I would spend twenty-two months trying to get treatment at a Veterans Administration hospital. They finally diagnosed the hepatitis in June of 1992 but said they wouldn't treat it.

Somewhere down the line I was told I had probably contracted the disease in a hospital. I went to my HMO doctors and asked for my records. My first doctor's nurse just handed me my whole file; the records were six years old. I looked at the blood tests: liver enzymes six times normal—sure signs of liver disease.

During the last three years I've had to make a study of hepatitis and been to fifteen doctors. In March I completed six months of Interferon treatment—double dosages because I'd had the disease for so long. The swelling had gone down and for the first time in three years I could bend over and lie on my right side. I told the doctor I had a pain in my side. He said, "Well, it isn't hepatitis, and that's all I agreed to treat. There is no pain associated with hepatitis."

Blood tests show the Interferon treatment was unsuccessful. I still have an active virus chewing up my liver. The doctor says I have three options: I can do nothing; I can wait six months and try again; or, I can begin a new Interferon program right now. If I can't get the virus stopped I'll probably end up with liver cancer.

Tom Freeman
Colton, Calif.

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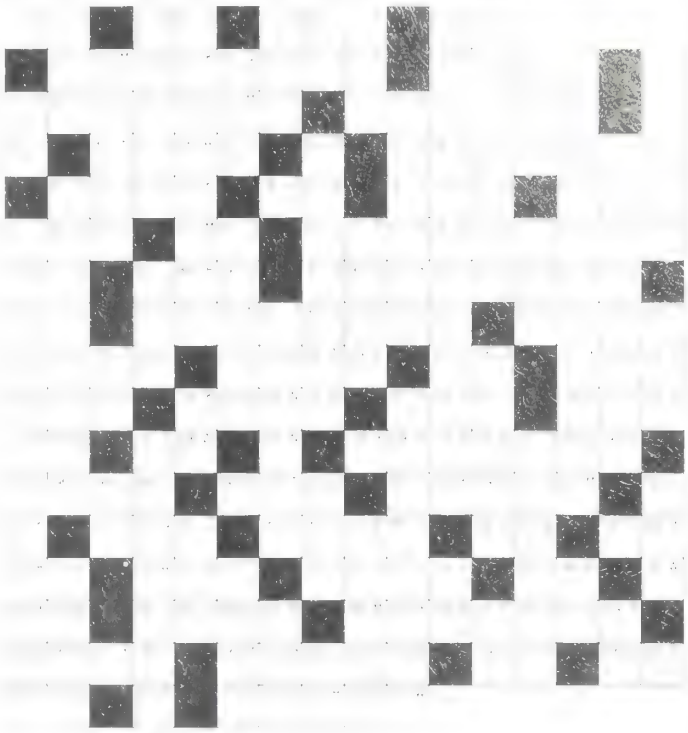
China at your fingertip

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DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 141

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form answers to the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 77.



WORDS

A. Adult cattle — 54 74 91 170 38 59

B. Ridicules; dismisses as absurd (2 wds.) — [illegible]

C. In the heart of the N.Y. theater district (5 wds.) — 4 [illegible] 25 77 84 28 112 204

D. [illegible] — 70 174 7 107 129

E. Sudden effusion — 93 104 183 82 16 101 75 166

F. Young child — [illegible]

G. Cord of tough, fibrous tissue; sinew — 20 194 72 12 135 214

H. Evades, stalls, waffles — 43 186 92 120 171 145

I. Science concerned with bettering people by improving their environment — 48 83 175 200 134 11 213 208

J. Sheltered nook — [illegible]

K. Receptions, usually in someone's honor — 148 142 24 184 177 13

L. Extraterrestrial — 180 195 123 153 140 42 158 [illegible]

M. Reliable, secure — 205 100 50 201

N. Establish — 188 5 8 15 69 53 32 [illegible]

O. Made one's way through or across — 19 137 125 130 191 46 97 51

P. Awkward; clumsy

Q. Without all water removed — [illegible]

R. Engraving with [illegible] — 110 45 73 168 3 173 165

S. [illegible] drinks — [illegible] 7 64 193 85 76

T. Medieval script; [illegible] — 192 111 60 95 58 1 150 [illegible]

U. Where extra tolling [illegible] — [illegible] 41 86 105 125 [illegible]

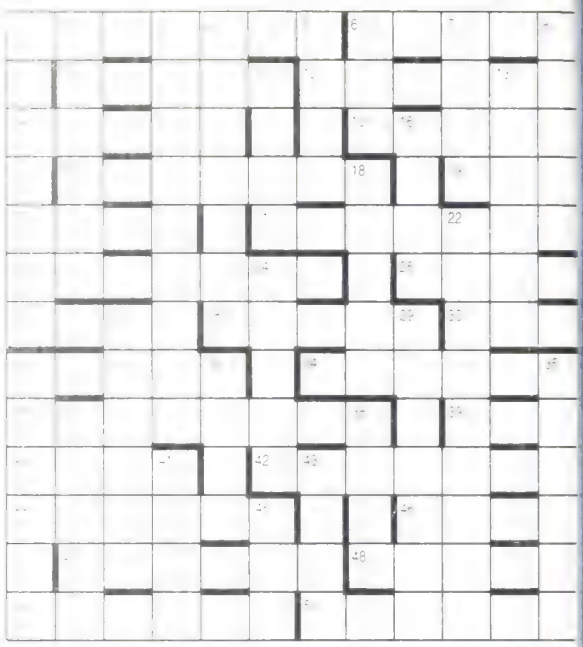
V. [illegible] — 39 144 122 146 47 176 114

W. Female ruminant [illegible]

X. Mrs. ——, in Sheridan's *The* [illegible]

Y. Extreme, outra[illegible] — [illegible] 19 163 30 179 34 [illegible]

[illegible] of J. F. Cooper's [illegible] — 8[illegible] 161 4



1. See authorities again on short trips (7)
2. More willingly holding extra therapy? Just the opposi
3. Galli and Maltby, e.g., coming on a cryptic (9)
4. Tough protective cover left on center of monument
5. Poles going without sleep? Just the opposite! Move
6. *See 1 Across* (3)
7. Risky for investors doubling $10,000 (4, *hyph.*)
8. *See 50 Across* (5)
   Level with the English—value ending of monarchy
13. The Spanish smell woolly (6)
16. Head off peril, for divers purposes (4)
18. Riot disrupted center of the city of Paris (5)
22. Charge for hauling not applicable for Spanish port
24. Takes first place . . . and plummets (5)
27. Butler, abridged or lengthy speaker? (6)
29. *See 44 Across* (7)
31. Big blow: a party split on top (7)
32. Small businessman, regular guy, shot inside fron of restaurant (6)
33. Pet isn't trained (4)
35. They never disagree, having seen my shot (6)
37. *See 15 Across* (5)
38. *See 14 Across* (4)
41. Catch small horse (4)
43. One's task is to score (4)
45. Poet almost excited to give Keats his start? (3)

Puzzle by [illegible] Matthews, Jonathan Mayer, Owen Thomas, Columbus, Ohio, and Brian Halpin, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

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Pardon us while we annihilate a few old notions



...er was a Cruise Missile. Its mother was a concert hall. And it's three parts power, two parts elegance, and all parts incredible. It's the ...2-valve, 250hp, DOHC V8 Aurora by Oldsmobile. But if you feel more comfortable calling it a luxury-performance sedan, go right ...Aurora by Oldsmobile. See what happens.

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the Garter-Belt Man, the Relationship Seller,
the 80 Percent Gal, and Socrates Explain the Art of the Deal

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◆

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How the *New York Times* Got Whitewater Wrong
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HOW NOW, DRUGGED COW?

to Rural Vermont
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to Mr. John Candy

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50 miles a day. 20,000 miles a year. Potho
Gravel. Sleet. As Tom Schus

Like the other members of the Saturn Cycling Team, manager Tom Schuler gets to tool around in a Saturn SW2. Air conditioning. A place to put your cold drink. That's the way to spend a race day.

Actually, this thirty-seven-year-old ironman-turned-businessman has earned a cushy ride. A pro cyclist for over ten years, Tom's spent the last season guiding the Saturn team to its most successful season ever. Doing everything from working the phones to getting out there in the car. Pacing. Encouraging. Making repairs. To the bikes, of course.

The cyclists put 20,000 miles a year on their two-wheelers but Tom puts *four times* that many on his Saturn in strenuous conditions. Yet, as Tom tells it, the wagon is ready to ride every single day. Over hill. Over dale. (What's a dale? A valley, we think.) On straightaways. In the curves. And we thought the torsional twist test at the Saturn testing center out in Mesa, Arizona was demanding.

Yeah, until a bike offers lumbar support, armrests and windshield wipers, Tom will take the Saturn any day. Anyone for another hill?



Manager Tom Schuler gets to drive an SW2.
Saturn team cyclists (left to right)
Tom Swift, James Carney and Jeanne Golay don't.



riders may need lots energy

One reason A LOT of people

the ability to adjust to

different driving conditions—

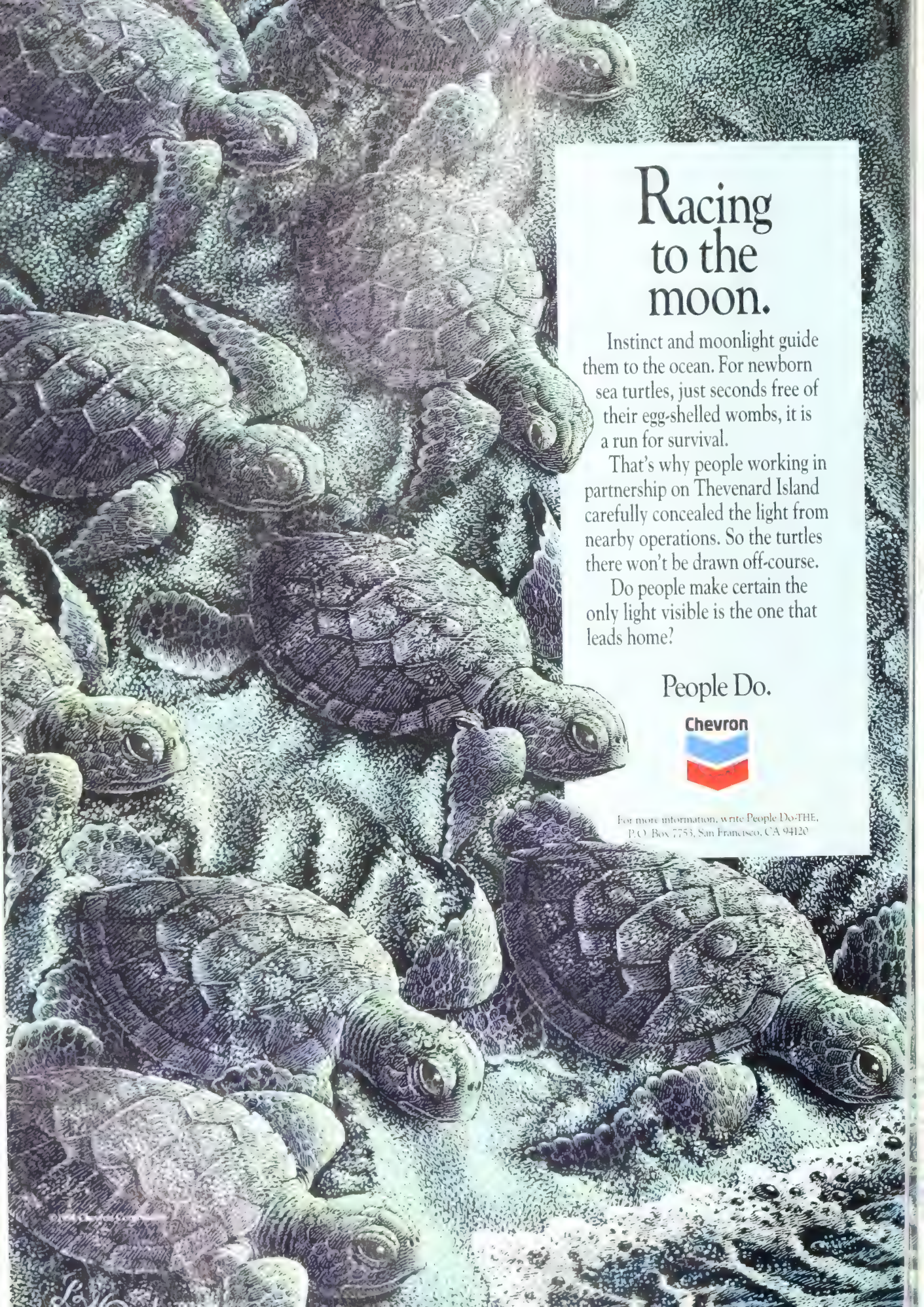
handling. Still fuzzy on it?

would be more than happy

to clarify things.

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OCTOBER 1994

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Cover painting: Beth Peck

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LETTERS

Fighting AIDS with Kitsch

Daniel Harris begins his cynical, stone-hearted critique, "Making Kitsch from AIDS" [July], with a misleading description of Under One Roof, the San Francisco store that he attacks as "peddl[ing] memento mori as shamelessly as tourist traps peddle souvenirs." As the executive director of Visual Aid, the agency that founded Under One Roof, I'm compelled to rebut his view of what we do and who we are.

Under One Roof is a nonprofit gift shop that is run almost entirely on volunteer labor. More than seventy nonprofit AIDS service organizations buy merchandise wholesale, put it in the store, and keep the profits that result from retail sales. Most of the merchandise is not kitsch and is related in some way to the agencies' mission (for example, Visual Aid sells Keith Haring stickers and tote bags because we support professional visual artists who have AIDS). The agencies use their profits to care for people with AIDS. Contrary to the impression Harris gives, these agencies are not profiteers. Nothing connects these enterprises to such commercial appropriations of AIDS as Benetton's ads.

Harris claims that "AIDS kitsch can be linked to the unusual [political] conditions under which activists were *mutually* forced to raise money for research, treatment, and edu tion." [Emphasis added] Those c ditions haven't changed. At Un One Roof, we supply what the n ket demands in order to make m ey to provide for otherwise unfun services. *So what* if some of what sell is kitsch?

It should come as no news to H ris that gay people have historic enjoyed a healthy and fun relat ship to kitsch, as Susan Sontag served thirty years ago in her e "Notes on Camp." Yet he slams sentimentality and nostalgia rounding the AIDS Memorial Q What a spiritually impoverished r ing! Are sentimentality and nost invalid human responses in these modern times? If so, then why not ject stores specializing in antique and model railroads to the same tique? At least Under One Roof's lead to a greater public good. A what we do so different from Scouts selling cookies or chur holding bake sales? Is AIDS so s sanct that we should be held to ferent standard?

The answer, of course, is no. *A* is a *disease*. It's bad enough that disease is politicized; it's worse that the people who have it ar lentlessly pictured as "victims" by ple like Harris. In fact, it seems Harris's real problem is with wh calls the "revision" of the ima people with AIDS (PWAs). "a propagandists," he writes, "have f themselves in a peculiar moral as they attempt to portray PW once as "guiltless martyrs" ar "stouthearted heroes." The reali

lished, and all letters are subject to editing. Let-

s, is that PWAs are neither. As
A living and working among
s, I can say from firsthand expe-
e that we are *not* guilty, that my
friends *are* martyred by public
erence, and that the struggle to
live against incredible odds is,
often, heroic.
ht AIDS, not the people who
AIDS.

e Salazar
rancisco

niel Harris's account of the
ification of AIDS is cynical yet
. In our media-driven society,
arketing of AIDS is as inevitable
s lurid. Although the Quilt and
pop paeans to AIDS sufferers
nack of schlock, I would expect
ng less from the media moguls of
wood, Madison Avenue, et al.
activists and their media co-
would be singular indeed if they
or take sentimental advantage
DS and its victims; such is the
t economy.
e public has opened its wallet to
charities, but more important-
s have opened their minds. Al-
ic or not, producers of AIDS
books, and other products con-
to promote tolerance for blame-
ctims, be they gay, Haitian, or
rl next door. Though Harris's
gandists" may simplistically de-
IDS victims as archetypal heroes
artyrs, they have raised aware-
of the syndrome's causes, its
ing effects, and the humanity of
k and their loved ones. Is that
ng?

Rossel
ndria, Va.

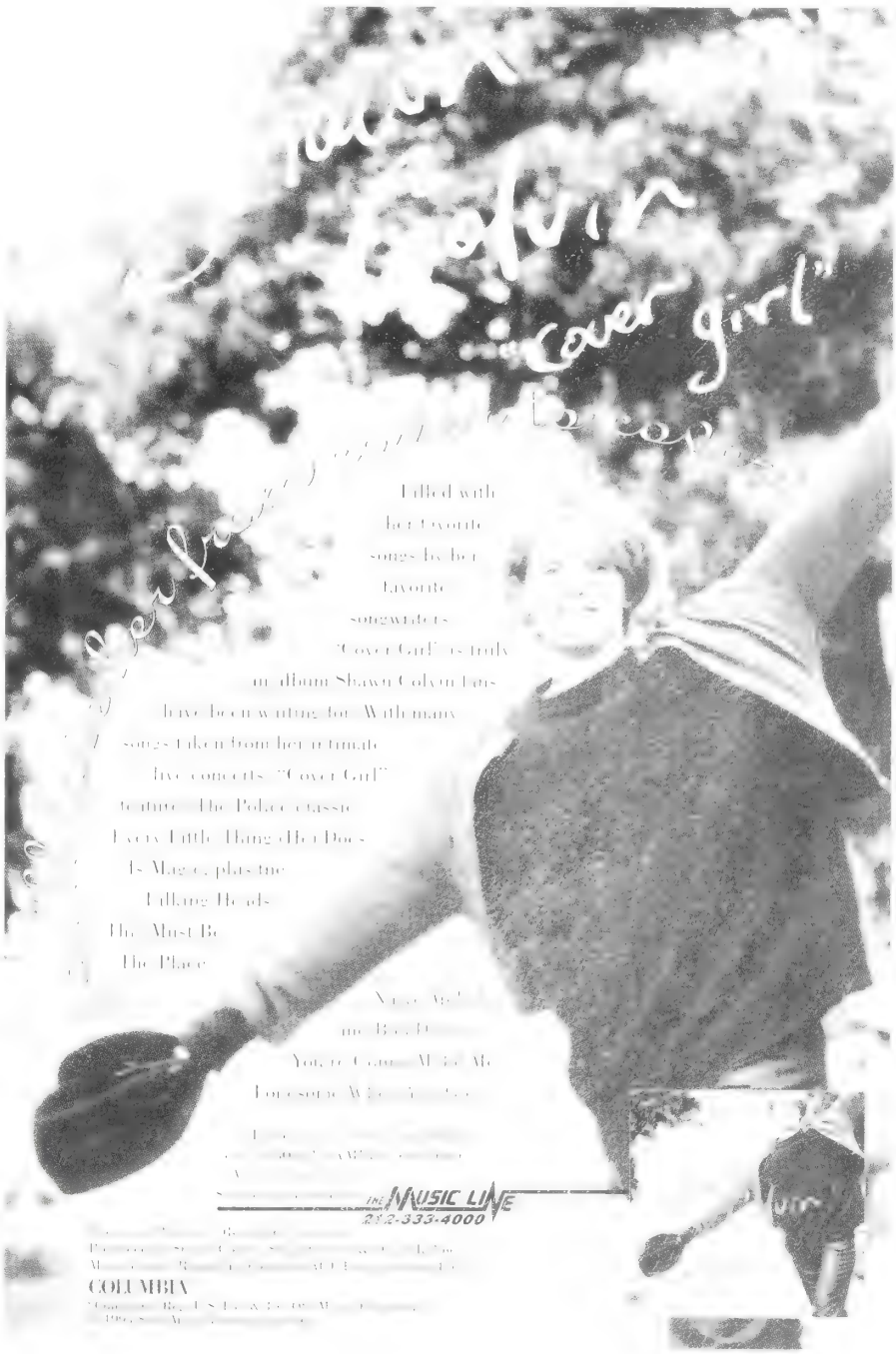
to the Fair?

ing in the Midwest, I am always
ed to read an article such as
Foster Wallace's depiction of
inois State Fair ["Ticket to the
July]. He attacks an institution
while certainly a testament to
ow taste, is hardly a threat to
tellectual stability of this coun-
s caustic approach suggests that
hing sinister lurks beneath the
ly colored lights of the midway.
ile Wallace makes small con-
cessions toward his subject (the milk-
shakes are good), he seems less inter-
ested in the motivations and nuances
of this celebration; he chooses instead
to show off his astute observations on
the ugliness of the masses.

I have never been to a state fair,
and I probably won't show up at one
soon. I do not doubt that they are peo-
pled by religious fanatics, obnoxious
teens, stinking carnies, and (gasp!) fat
people. Are Wallace and the citizens
of his chosen state of residence really
a better class of human being than
those who visit the Illinois [illegible]
Neanderthal [illegible]
it, and blot out [illegible]
me is the most [illegible]
all.

Peter Schillin
Royal Oak, Mich.

David Foster Wallace [illegible]
expressed in his article on the Illinois
State Fair [illegible] that the cavalcade
significantly different from the bar-
baric Midwest is easily proven false.



Nose, May Cause Fatal Infection' "

Magazine reads: "Sure, you could al-

pulling on those delicate little hairs is rather painful and can easily give rise

manufacturers of "chintzola" that people who are prepared to believe that to their nostrils is a major advance in cosmetic science are equally dis-

clogging in David Foster Wallace's ar-

in part *because* of their misconcep-

Modern American clogging is a unique dance form derived from a mixture of predominantly British and African dance rhythms similar to those in early southern Appalachian music. The music combined the ban-

were added by step dancing and hand patting, clapping and slapping. Ap-

flatfoot or buck dancing, a kind of "country cousin" of tap dancing, its better-known relative.

When the word "clog" was adopting time to the music," not to any particular type of shoe. Clogging can

ragtime, jazz, Charleston, boogie, and swing to popular country, rock, or

lo in lines. And those aren't, as Wal-

genuine joy that comes from a kind of do-it-yourself pride—cutting loose, whooping, hollering, stomping, a 360 spin on one heel, come right, not giving a damn about the mind and refreshes the soul. Believe it. As an old lady pushing seventy, I've clogged for almost ten years in most of the fifty states—I ought to

Martha Ove
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Soon an Empty Sea?

Joel Sad looks at the article about disappearing bluefin tuna ["Death of a Giant," June] misses one important point. He writes that driving tuna to extinction is more difficult than poisoning the last condor. The fact is that the population of many ocean creatures is believed to be like a house of cards: you can take away a certain number of individuals with little effect, but when you suddenly drop below a critical threshold, the whole structure collapses—into extinction.

The ocean is vast, and the ability of female tuna to find mates to fertilize their millions of eggs is probably a function of how many fish there are in the sea. What this critical minimum density is and whether the tuna population operates like a house of cards are, unfortunately, topics that remain as mysterious to scientists as to the general public.

Carol Ki
Durham, N.H.

Nixon, Now More Than Ever

Lapham ["Mr. Nixon"] accurate when he says that Nixon's crimes have been forgiven because he worked so hard to commit them. It's ironic that the steps in his "rehabilitation," such as going to Russia on "fact-finding missions" and then returning to state the enemy, the press. Ironic that journalists, nearly as one, rolled over for a man who had listened to their footsteps in his sleep for so long.

Lapham's characterization of Nixon Gillian Sl Estum, Mercede

captures the legendary awkward perfectly, but it also begs another, troubling question. How did the summate Geek get as far as he How did a man for whom small was a form of torture reach the nacle of a field swarming with sm talking, glad-handing image mon

Those who were offended by the last post-Nixon platitudes take comfort in the fact that the view of history will focus first o greatest distinction—as the only president forced from office.

A great American? Never. A t cious one? Absolutely.

John C. Richards
Los Angeles

Lewis Lapham's July Notebo the diatribe of a bitter man, a Nixon hater. He makes no effo strike any kind of objective bal preferring instead to put a sinister castic spin on the whole Nixon, distorting the record so as to cr portrait of a mythical monster, w he then tries to fob off as a fair a ment.

Nothing that Lapham has wr can diminish the fact that Nixo regarded by a majority of citizens an effective vice president u Eisenhower and a highly respe president in his first term. Ye bombed Cambodia in pursuit o Viet Cong there—a controversia cision—but he did ultimately en Kennedy/Johnson adventure in nam, as he promised he would opening to China and détente the Soviet Union were both st manlike acts recognized as around the world.

These accomplishments will vive and outlive his brief but c trophic fall from grace. The lilliputi critics cannot deny him his pla the sun.

Carl R. Ferderer
Fairfax, Va.

Lewis Lapham's column on death of Nixon brought to mind Martin's Nixon routine from way when nobody even conceived o giving the man. Back then he "Tricky Dick," and we thought h ways would be. Nixon masks we

lemand. He was the comical bo-
n of the Halloween party. We
glad to be rid of him, but many
cursed Gerald Ford for letting
rook" off so easily.
rtin, in his dumb "aw gosh"
proposed the comic notion of
ly feeling sorry for Nixon, and
red up an image of a pathetic
armless old man walking on the
in San Clemente with his met-
ector and baggy shorts. It was
because it was such a come-
, and so apt for a man like Nixon,
ved of purpose. It was also funny
se in the image we recognized
ivate man, aimless and lacking
ture.
ey say that when the micro-
es were on Nixon became the
cian, but when the microphones
off there was absolutely no small
n the man. He was unable to
on as a person because there was
ng inside. This is why we feel
for him. But in doing so we con-
ntly forget the contempt he had
s fellow Americans. Steve Mar-
tin's routine was so funny because back then we never dreamed it was possible to forget the grief this man had just finished putting us through.

Mark Smith
Lake Leelanau, Mich.

Dropping Names, One After Another

In his article on names ["Confessions of a Name Dropper," August], Don Asher cites the psychoanalyst Erik Erikson as an example of someone who "overcame [his] parents' cutesy predilections to achieve celebrity," i.e., he overcame his alliterative and duplicative name. As I recall from my introductory college psychology course, Erikson gave *himself* the name. I'm not exactly sure why he chose to so name himself, but I do remember that he was trying to make some philosophical statement. It may have had to do with his being adopted or with his wish to prove that he had become his own man, but he chose the name "Erikson" because he figuratively con-
sidered himself
cause, he was
son of Erik and
son."

John Book
Minneapolis

Like Don Asher, I too collect names. And, if I may, I would add the following to his excellent article:

Mimsey Borogroves, Rodney Codpiece, Stannous Darkfield, Lorem Ipsum Dolor, Al Fresco, Eheu Fugaces, Laurasia Godwana, Perle Grout, Jejeune Ileitis, Brittania Kink, Aeolian Loess, Iota Minim, Orotund Ortolan, Matilda Outback, Nosey Parker, Aeolian Pet, Nora Pinephrine, Flikker Poot, Pinga Potenza, Hermes Quicksilver, Beau Rivage, Etaoin Shrdlu, Fulvous Smegma, Rex Sole, Taller Te Koop, Parca Triage, Rufous Ullage, Vafvax Vadna, Veronica Vanilla, Sal Volatile, Wickiup Yurt, and Jot Zed Zillion.

Brian Kevin Beck
Whitewater, Wis.

ELEBRATING THE FEMININE EXPERIENCE

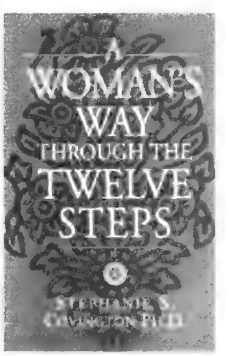
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Patricia O'Gorman, Ph.D.

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NOTEBOOK

Devout observances

By Lewis H. Lapham

The world is not a prison house, but a [illegible] of bewildered infants are trying to spell

Ten years ago the foreign journal[illegible] wanted to talk about America's weapons, the subtlety of their engineering and the certainty of their moral [illegible] and likely destinations. Now the corre[illegible] complex instead of the military-indus[illegible] week in August I met with more or less the same set of questions from a British magazine editor, a French social critic, and a Japanese television producer. They had been following the progress of the health-care reforms promoted by President and Mrs. Clinton as well as by five committees in Congress, but although they had a fairly clear sense of the political and financial arguments at hand, they were baffled by the surrealism of the conversation.

Under what Alice in Wonderland rule of illogic did the Americans spend so much money on the care and protection of their health (nearly $1 trillion in 1993) and yet, simultaneously and with no apparent sense of contradiction, so recklessly indulge their passions for alcohol, chocolate, tobacco, [illegible] what they said about the failures of their health-care system, then why didn't they amend the behaviors that sent so many of them to the emergency wards? The United States possessed the world's finest collection of CAT scanners and artificial hearts, but every day fourteen American children were killed by gunfire, and the ratio between the country's shelters for battered women and its shelters for stray animals stood at three to one in favor of the animals. Had the Americans no notion of cause and effect? Did they imagine that their Constitution, or their American dream, or their genius for tinkering with machines, held them harmless against the laws of nature? Why was nobody saying that death admits of no known cures, or that there isn't enough money in the world, let alone in the treasury of the United States, to guarantee every man, woman, and child in America the inalienable right to long life, perfect eyesight, and freedom from suffering?

Long ago in the days of the evil Soviet empire and the once-urgent questions about the prospect of World War III, I learned that the grand designs of American policy invariably resist a too-literal-minded reading of the text. I never could explain to the gentleman from *Le Monde* the sublime romanticism in the Strategic Defense Initiative (a.k.a. Star Wars) because I couldn't get across the point that the technology on which it presumably was based not only didn't exist but was impossible to construct, that if the system were to serve the magical purpose that President Reagan assigned to it, the air force would need to lift into orbit a space platform roughly the size and weight of the state of New Jersey. President Clinton's prescription for universal health care belongs to the same order of imaginary numbers as President Reagan's remedy against universal nuclear annihilation, and if the foreign journalists were having trouble with the metaphysics it was because few of them grasp the doctrine of American exceptionalism, and they fail to appreciate the degree to which we construe physical well-being as the most perfect of earthly goods. We now spend more money on health than we spend on any other service or commodity in the inventory of human happiness—more than we spend on [illegible] metics, or cocaine, or weapons dee[illegible] invincible—and for the promise of [illegible] mortality, even a false promise m[illegible] by an itinerant quack or an unlicen[illegible] saint, we will gladly pay the pric[illegible] bankruptcy.

What we have made of the hea[illegible] care debate over the last two year[illegible] fers a specific proof of the gen[illegible] proposition. For nearly the whol[illegible] President Clinton's term in office[illegible] political and administrative classes [illegible] kept up a constant hum of words a[illegible] the need to revise the country's di[illegible] matic relations with death, but [illegible] God knows how many hours of [illegible] and how many pages of print, wha[illegible] anybody said? A great deal about [illegible] protocols of the treaty and littl[illegible] nothing about its substance. Ra[illegible] than address the hard questions—[illegible] ones about why the rich enjoy a c[illegible] fort of doctors unknown to the po[illegible] how to organize the inevitable ratio[illegible] of medical care in a way that won[illegible] perceived as both cruel and unjust—[illegible] discuss, without interruption and a[illegible] terminable length, the progress of [illegible] or that bill through the reception ro[illegible] on Capitol Hill, President Clint[illegible] standing in the opinion polls, the g[illegible] of the insurance companies, the [illegible] reaucratic tissue of this or that H[illegible] the proliferation of high-priced lo[illegible] ists, the cost of television commer[illegible] meant to frighten Democratic c[illegible] gressmen or pensioners over the a[illegible] fifty, the conspiracies of druggists. [illegible] might as well have been arguing a[illegible] the number of angels that can danc[illegible] the head of a pin.

The most expensive debates in [illegible] age resolve themselves into the que[illegible] "Why do I have to die?" Even a[illegible] cently as 1945, the question still c[illegible] be addressed in the United State[illegible] poets and clergymen. The events o[illegible] last half-century remanded the c[illegible]



IT'S NOT MISSION CONTROL. IT'S JUST THE PHONE COMPANY.

On our end, it's Network Operations Centers from GTE that make sure billions of calls get through perfectly, day and night. On your end, it's just the phone. It's amazing what we can do together.

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approach the topic of our collective health in exactly the same way that we approach the topic of our individual health. Alone on the physician's examining table, or assembled as a constituency in the consulting rooms of the public policy debate (i.e., as the Senator Orrin Hatch juggle contradictory sets of meaningless statistics on CNN), we await the coming of miracles. In the meantime we prefer to know as little as possible about the precise terms of our own mortality, about the ebb and flow of our bodily fluids or the "health product procurement procedures" that supposedly will take effect in the year 2002—i.e., in the promised land known to the politicians as "the out years," when all the deserts bloom and there is always enough money to

The acronyms and the technical

doubt, and we remain grateful for the

of money. Wonders come to pass at sufficiently regular intervals to justify the heavy tithes imposed on the faithful by the insurance companies (the modern equivalent of the old ecclesiastical bureaucracies) and to sustain the popular belief in divine

Over the last fifty years the volume of superstition in the country has expanded at almost the same rate as the achievement of our science, and I suspect that both variants on the theme of immortality followed upon the American victories in World War II. Prior to 1945 few Americans imag- [illegible] verse and therefore entitled to immunity against the evils afflicting the lesser nations of the earth, and the medical professions performed very few miracles. For most illnesses the treatments were largely therapeutic, and doctors relied on common sense, a few rudimentary surgical procedures, the natural resilience of the human body, and the steadily preserved hope that by next week or tomorrow morning the patient somehow would show signs of improvement. The presiding spirit within most American hospitals still retained something of the old stoic idea that the strength to confront suffering was to be found in the people, not in the machines.

As a boy of eleven in 1946, I used to accompany an older cousin on his Sunday morning rounds through the wards of a public hospital in San Francisco, and although the walls were badly in need of paint and nobody had enough of anything—not enough light, not enough anesthetic, not enough time—I came to think of a hospital as a place where otherwise ordinary people, both doctors and patients, performed acts of extraordinary courage. My cousin was then in the second year of his residency, and occasionally he arranged for me to sit with the students in the surgical amphitheater, where I acquired a rudimentary knowledge of human anatomy and learned that although sooner or later even the most artful physician had to bow to the superior force of "the senior practitioner"—the pale and humorless figure whose judgment was final and whose pres-

ence announced the sack of the c ital city—the doctors fought tenac diversionary actions, postponing delaying the inevitable defeat, making sure that death claimed victory under the rules of civili warfare in order that the patients n not humiliate themselves. I don't member any specialists. Probably I too young to know what a speci

I do remember that my cousin mired the writings of Seneca, the man essayist and politician forced the Emperor Nero to commit suicid A.D. 65. Seneca wrote his *Letters f a Stoic* for the specific purpose of te ing himself to meet his own death manner that he wouldn't find hum ating. My cousin was particularly f of a line that I soon had verbatim "'Rehearse death.' To say this is to a person to rehearse his freedom person who has learned how to die unlearned how to be a slave."

The old stoic spirit was no ma for the medical technologies brou forth by the inventive genius of Second World War. Armed wit newly acquired pharmacopoeia of uinely miraculous drugs, a new g eration of doctors found itself cap of genuinely astonishing cures. As supply of miracles increased, so the demand. Infirmities once con ered natural to the human condi (old age, anxiety, weak chins, ir tility, adolescence) were promote the status of illnesses deserving specialized vocabulary and gov ment money. The expanding def tions of what constitutes dise supported parallel expansions wi the health-care industries, which employ upwards of 10 million pe and account for 14 percent of the tional economy. As medical spen surpassed defense spending, the sade against death acquired mar the characteristics of the crus against godless communism. In five years since the end of the C War, the number of new recruit the health establishment has incre 43 percent, and most of them h learned very quickly to speak the eratic languages proper to the cu dians of the unutterable myste During the heyday of the Cold W not one citizen in 10,000 could r

he throw weight of an ICBM or
ibe the circumference of anni-
on likely to surround a nuclear
sion. In the midst of the current
eration of medical strategies, not
patient in 10,000 can read an X
make sense of a hospital bill, ex-
the chemistry of aspirin, or locate
osition of his or her own spleen.
and large we count our igno-
a blessing, and all present can re-
abulous stories (heard from Oprah
e *National Enquirer*, if not from a
d) about the man with the glass
and the woman safely returned
the grave. The media cater to
uperstitions by their incessant
ling on the fear of disease, and
eadlines bring word not only of
era in Africa and AIDS in Holly-
l but also of flesh-eating bacteria
nnecticut and the mysterious ad-
e of liver spots among sunbathers
rasota Springs. Our credulity in-
the contempt of our appointed
rs. and during the brief span of
wn lifetime the practice of
cine in the public hospitals in-
ingly has become a dreaded ritu-
at assigns to the patient the role
ying victim—an ordeal by com-
e that requires rather than alle-
s the postures of humiliation.

cause so much of modern
cine is a matter of faith, a good
of the procedures that its crit-
ondemn as "waste" or "mismanagement"—the ceaseless filling out
rms, the ceremonial taking of
d, the solemn murmuring of
nyms—also can be understood as
Thorstein Veblen in *The Theo-*
the Leisure Class defined as "de-
observances." The goods and
ces in question conform to what
en called the canon of honorif-
aste, proving their inestimable
n as sacrificial offerings and acts
ety by virtue of their futility and
ffluous expense. The more opu-
he technology, or the more cost-
physician's fee, the more benign
presumed result. The supposed
in the system is its bone and
ow.

e hold fast to our beliefs despite a
derable bulk of evidence to the
rary. In 1991, the cost of health
n Greece and Spain amounted, re-
ively, to $404 and $848 per capita, and yet both countries reported longer life expectancies than did the United States, which, in that same year, measured the cost of its health care at $2,868 per capita.

Late last autumn, in response to an article by Willard Gaylin published in *Harper's Magazine* under the title "Faulty Diagnosis: Why Clinton's Health-Care Plan Won't Cure What Ails Us," I received a letter from Jack Heggie, a subscriber in Boulder, Colorado, who extended the line of argument with a number of mordant observations drawn from his close reading of various medical journals—i.e., that when doctors go on strike, as happened in Los Angeles in 1976, the death rate declines; that in many hospitals as many as 40 percent of all medical diagnoses (as subsequently verified on autopsies) are wrong; that as long ago as 1974 American hospitals performed 2.4 million unnecessary surgical operations at a cost of $4 billion and 10,000 lives.

The parallels with the weapons industry require little elaboration. The hospital surcharges for an aspirin or an artificial limb bear comparison to the markups paid by the Pentagon for a cruise missile or a wrench. Like the military-industrial complex, the medical-industrial complex invites the practice of large-scale fraud (conservatively estimated at $100 billion a year in false billings), and neither enterprise concerns itself with the niggling questions of supply and demand. Disease serves as an appropriately expensive substitute for Bolshevism, and the prompters of the public alarm direct their patriotic anger at the fellow-travelers in our midst who neglect their aerobic exercises, continue to smoke cigarettes, and fail to eat their arugula.

Even if President Clinton manages to rearrange the country's health-care system, I doubt that his reforms will have much effect on the American attitudes toward sickness and health. Judging by this summer's newspaper accounts, all the familiar superstitions remain comfortably in place. The medical ecclesiastics came and went, speaking of HMOs and DRGs and HIPCs, of "global budgets" and "managed competition," but none of the interested [illegible] or the insurance and pharmaceutical companies [illegible] tual questions [illegible] medicine or the unwillingness of the American public to make its peace with death. Still reluctant to call his campaign promise by its rightful name (a chimera projected onto the screen of the out years), the President redefined the term "universal health coverage" to mean 95 percent of the citizenry (a figure that excluded 13 million people) and set his countrymen the lesson of how to be a slave—how to bow and stoop and bend the knee not only to the special interests and the day's opinion polls but also to the belief that death is a mistake and disease an accident distinctly un-American.

At the end as at the beginning, the debate relapsed into an expectant silence papered over by the chatter of a lobbyist's "process points." After two years of waiting for a miracle—from MetLife, from the American Medical Association, from almost anybody with a stethoscope or a formula for spinning straw into penicillin—the still unanswered questions about who pays for what had been remanded from the secret convocation of Hillary Clinton's oracles to the equally discreet proceedings of a conference committee on Capitol Hill instructed to reconcile the irreconcilable differences between a sham hypothesis proposed by the House and a sham hypothesis proposed by the Senate. Although every politician in Washington could fairly guess that any law passed by Congress under the rubric of health-care reform was likely to provide the American people with less care for more money, all present professed devout faith in the sublime paradox summed up by Senator Bob Kerrey (D., Nebr.) in the phrase "All we have to do is to spend more in order to spend less."

The choir of voices singing the praise of the medical-industrial complex borrowed the liturgies of the old military-industrial complex and replaced the doctrine of mutual assured destruction with the doctrine of mutual assured salvation. The notion presupposes a strenuous leap of faith, but then so did the theories about surviving a nuclear onslaught, and so does the story of Satan's fall from heaven. ■

There are larger works of art. But none that hang so well on turns.



AURORA
An American Drea

HARPER'S INDEX

Portion of Rwanda's Tutsi population killed since May : 1/2

Portion of Germany's Jewish population killed between 1933 and 1945 : 1/3

entage of Americans who say "nothing the U.S. could accomplish in Haiti would be worth the life of one U.S. soldier" : 50

Chances that an arms sale made to a developing country last year was made by the United States : 3 in 4

Chances in 1992 : 1 in 2

r in which the Department of Energy will begin spending less on military projects than on environmental ones : 1994

ximum amount of radiation per American the government allows nuclear facilities to release each year, in millirems : 100

ances that a person exposed to such radiation will get cancer, according to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission : 1 in 286

Number of years Bob Dole's health insurance has been paid for by the federal government : 39

Chances that a typical U.S. group-health-insurance plan covers unrestricted abortions : 2 in 3

Chances that a typical plan covers oral contraceptives : 1 in 3

Percentage of American teenage mothers who become pregnant again within two years : 26

Percentage of nonvirgin teenagers who say they wish they had waited longer to have sex : 54

Number of countries whose fertility rates have declined at least 50 percent during the last generation : 17

Ratio of worldwide military spending, per soldier, to educational spending, per school-age child : 25:1

Gallons of milk produced in the United States last year, expressed as a percentage of annual consumption : 103

Number of side effects to a cow's health associated with synthetic bovine growth hormone : 18 (see page 82)

Gallons of hamburger grease sold by McDonald's since 1955 : 281,250,000

Estimated number of personal computers discarded last year worldwide : 5,000,000

Percentage of Americans who believe that the world will be "better off" in the year 2000 : 26

Percentage of Americans who believe that there is baseball in heaven : 56

Number of contestants in the first annual Coffin Race held in Lake City, Colorado, last May : 5

Rank of Virginia, among states with the largest ghost population, according to the Ghost Research Society : 1

ercentage of Oliver North's Senate campaign contributions of more than $200 that came from outside Virginia : 87

Percentage of his opponent's reelection-campaign contributions of more than $200 that did : 81

atio of contributions made to the Democratic Party since 1990 by Judith Krantz to those made by Jane Fonda : 3:1

Rank of Bill Clinton and Richard Nixon, among the best-selling president masks last Halloween : 1,2

Number of the 610 jail cells reserved by the Woodstock '94 festival that were used : 24

ght, in feet, of a West Virginia prison wall scaled last June by an escaping inmate using a cord made of dental floss : 18

Number of stories a New York City cat fell last June without sustaining serious injury : 46

Average number of stories a cat must fall before reaching its maximum falling velocity of 60 miles per hour : 5

Number of transatlantic flights the Concorde can complete in the time required for Columbus's first voyage : 448

Ratio of the number of French-speakers in France to the number in Africa : 2:3

Number of "translators" commissioned last year by a Yale divinity student to convert the Bible into Klingon : 10

Number of "offensive" words to be dropped from the 1995 *Official Scrabble Dictionary* : 100

Percentage change since 1985 in membership of the Flat Earth Research Society : +70

Percentage change since 1986 in the number of American adults who believe in the devil : –29

Chances that a working American has had sex in the workplace : 1 in 2

Rank of "the boss's desk" among the most popular places to do so : 1

Figures cited are the latest available as of August 1994. Sources are listed on request. "Harper's Index" is copyrighted material.



READINGS

[Essay]

IS INTERVENTION A THING OF THE PAST?

From "Where Are the Great Powers? At Home with the Kids," by Edward N. Luttwak, in the July/August Foreign Affairs. *Luttwak is a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in Washington, D.C. Luttwak's essay "Grenada: The Art of War" appeared in the March 1985 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

The great powers have always grappled with the question of when to intervene in foreign conflicts. Historically, their decisions have been a matter of weighing various interests: balance of power, extension of influence, access to natural resources. In modern strategy, none of these factors carries as much weight as it used to. These days, in the war rooms of the great powers, there is a single question on everyone's mind: how many casualties will we have to suffer? The risk analysis is now largely a matter of gauging public opinion, determining the extent to which the public will tolerate combat casualties. More often than not, the great powers, confronted with this new calculus, are choosing not to engage in foreign conflicts at all. When, in fact, they do choose combat, the casualty factor is the decisive one in shaping their military strategy.

The war in the former Yugoslavia has been a painful lesson in the new global reality. Despite the fact that the bloodshed was in their backyard, Britain, France, and Germany flatly refused to risk their ground troops in combat. It was only after two years of war, displacement, and massacre, and with great reluctance, that those countries agreed to the carefully circumscribed threat of NATO air strikes.

In the case of Haiti, U.S. policy toward the military dictatorship has been guided primarily by the fear of public reaction to potential combat casualties. Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole, his eyes on the latest opinion polls, announced last fall that he "wouldn't risk any American lives" to restore democracy to that country.

Even in the Persian Gulf intervention, the imperative of minimizing American casualties dictated every military decision, from the huge size of the allied deployment to the sudden decision to call off the ground war. It is not hard to imagine what would have happened to the public's support of the war effort if U.S. casualties had approached the level of any one day of serious fighting in either world war.

This unwillingness to tolerate combat casualties is not unique to democracies. The Soviet Union's involvement in Afghanistan, despite its duration, was essentially a minimalist campaign; only the largest towns and major roads were defended. Soviet ground forces mostly remained inside their fortified garrisons, often failing to venture out even when guerrillas were known to be nearby. At the time, the explanation most commonly offered was the reluctance of Soviet commanders to rely on their poorly trained conscript troops. We now know better: the Soviet headquarters was under constant pressure from Moscow to avoid casualties at all costs for fear of the outraged reactions of families and friends.

The Afghanistan example allows us to eliminate the most common, and superficial, explanation for the refusal to accept even modest numbers of combat casualties: the impact of television coverage. The Soviet Union never allowed its population to see any televised images of war—

TROUBLE COMES TO RIVERDALE



From Archie Meets the Punisher, *a single-issue comic book published jointly last August by Archie Comic Publications and Marvel Comics. The issue, titled "When Worlds Collide," brings together Archie Andrews, "the typical American teenager," and the Punisher, a vigilante waging "a one-man war against crime." The two meet when the Punisher pursues a mobster to Riverdale, Archie's hometown.*

[illegible] the United States's war with Vietnam—as Mel Gurtov has noted—the reaction of Soviet society to the casualties of the Afghan War was essentially identical to the American reaction to the Vietnam War. In both cases, the casualties had a deeply traumatic effect on the population.

There is a more fundamental explanation for the new intolerance of combat casualties by the world's great powers: the demographic character of modern, postindustrial societies. The populations of the great powers of history were commonly made up of families of four, five, or six children; families of one, two, or three children were more unusual than families of seven, eight, or nine. On the other hand, infant-mortality rates were also high. It was entirely normal to lose one or more children to disease. As any number of historical studies have shown, death itself was a much more normal part of the familial experience. Given the prevalence of young death, the loss of one more youngster in war had a different meaning than it has for today's family with its two or three children, all of whom are expected to survive and each of whom represents a larger share of the family's emotional economy. To lose a young family member for any reason was no doubt always tragic, yet a death in combat was not the extraordinary and fundamentally unacceptable event it has now become.

Even parents who fully approve of their son's or daughter's decision to join the armed forces often react with shock and anger when their child is sent into a potential combat situation. And they are apt to view their child's wounding or death as an outrageous scandal rather than an occupational hazard. The Italians, perhaps more postindustrial than most in this sense, with Europe's lowest birthrate, have a word for these reactions: *mammismo*, which might be translated as "motherism." These attitudes are not confined to the relatives and friends of servicemen; they are widely shared throughout postindustrial society—were shared even within the Soviet elite, it turns out—and have great political resonance, powerfully constraining the use of force.

The days of frequent interventions by so-called great powers are over. And so, unless the

world is content to live with chronic disorder and widespread violence, a synthetic version of interventionism will have to be invented. Two rather improbable schemes present themselves as potential options. Both satisfy the essential requirement of circumventing the modern intolerance of casualties. Both could be organized quite efficiently. Yet both would be furiously opposed by the military establishment, and both undeniably have unpleasant moral connotations.

One scheme would be to copy the model of Britain's Gurkha units—the Nepalese mercenaries first recruited during the colonial era and more recently used in Northern Ireland and the Falklands. The United States could recruit troops in some suitable region abroad, if not in Nepal itself. They would be mercenaries, of course, but they would be of high quality, and a common ethnic origin would ensure their cohesion. In practice, U.S. Gurkhas would serve as infantry units, with native U.S. forces providing the more technical forms of combat support involving smaller risks and fewer casualties.

The alternative is to copy the foreign-legion model, with units that combine U.S. officers and nonnative volunteers who have renounced their national allegiance, perhaps attracted by the offer of U.S. citizenship after a given term of service. The United States, incidentally, raised ethnic mercenary units during the Vietnam War with rather good results, and it recruited individual foreign volunteers for European-based special forces. So neither scheme is as outlandish as it may seem.

If no such solution can be found to sidestep this new reluctance to intervene, the United States and the rest of the world will have to adapt to a new international situation. Unchecked violent disorders have both immediate and delayed effects, including disrupted export markets, refugees, and new sources of international crime and terrorism.

Perhaps Americans will be able to get used to such inconveniences. But they will also have to learn not to see, hear, or feel much that would otherwise offend their moral sensibilities. Richer inhabitants of the poorest countries learn from childhood how to step politely over the quadruple-amputee beggar in their path without ever actually looking at him, how not to see the starving mother and child, the waif and the abandoned elderly who beg from them as they walk into a restaurant or bank. Blindness can be learned, and Americans will have to learn how to ignore avoidable tragedies and atrocities. Sadly, the experience of Bosnia-Herzegovina shows that Americans have already made much progress in that direction.

[List]

SECRET WEAPONS FOR THE CNN ERA

From a list of nonlethal weapons being considered by the Pentagon, compiled by Richard L. Garwin, a former consultant to the Defense Department and a fellow emeritus at IBM's Thomas J. Watson Research Center, in Yorktown Heights, New York. Garwin's list is included in "New Applications of Nonlethal and Less Lethal Technology," in U.S. Intervention in the Post–Cold War World, *a collection of essays to be published in December by W. W. Norton. In his essay, Garwin notes that nonlethal weapons may be "extremely valuable in intervention where the 'CNN effect' puts a great premium on minimizing or eliminating casualties, particularly among noncombatants."*

Antitraction Technology (or "Slickum"): Using airborne delivery systems or human agents, we can spread or spray Teflon-type, environmentally neutral lubricants on railroad tracks, ramps, runways, even stairs and equipment, potentially denying their use for a substantial period. Such lubricants are costly and time-consuming to remove.

Roach Motels (or "Stickum"): Polymer adhesives, delivered by air or on the ground, can "glue" equipment in place and keep it from operating.

Window Breaking via Sonic Boom: Not a totally nonlethal weapon for people on the streets below high-rise buildings, this could be accomplished by low-altitude supersonic flight.

Supercaustics: Supercaustics can be millions of times more caustic than hydrofluoric acid. A round of jellied superacids could destroy the optics of heavily armored vehicles, penetrate glass, or silently destroy key weapons systems.

The Grime from Hell: A layer of paint weighing less than a gram per square meter can totally block light through a windshield, viewing window, or sensor lens. Alternatively, encountering very fine dust at the speed of a fast aircraft can micro-crater (sandblast) a windshield. In either case, the utility of a weapon is destroyed unless or until the surface can be cleaned or restored.

Foam, Sticky or Hard: To immobilize people or to render them less effective. Imagine trying to conduct your normal business in a world covered with raspberry jam.

Anesthetics: "Gas" could be used to put people to sleep. Tiny darts loaded with an appropriate anesthetic (fentanyl, [illegible] could do this more selectively and with a wide safety margin.

Infrasound: Very low-frequency sound genera-

[Warning]

THE G.O.P. PULLS OUT THE BIG GUNS

[illegible] memorandum sent by David A. Norcross, general counsel to the Republican National Committee, to thirty-eight Republican members [illegible] the day before a critical House vote on President Clinton's crime bill. The thirty-eight Republicans had crossed party lines in May to vote in favor of a federal ban on assault weapons; the Clinton bill would have enacted that ban. After receiving the resolution, which was never officially approved by the RNC, twenty-nine of the thirty-eight Republicans voted against the bill; the final vote to block the bill was 225 to 210.

WHEREAS the Platform of the Republican Party supports the right of the individual American citizen to keep and bear arms; and

WHEREAS a betrayal of the most basic foun[illegible] and rejection of one's own Republicanism; and

[illegible] test on May 5, 1994, when the U.S. House of Representatives voted on HR 4296, a bill banning certain vaguely defined types of firearms, and that bill [illegible]

[illegible] that encompasses all races, ages, handicaps, and dif[illegible]

[illegible] derogation of the individual American citizen's right to keep and bear arms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Re[illegible] deny all Republican Party funding to any and all [illegible]

[illegible] Republican National Committee shall seek alternative, real Republican candidates for the seats [illegible]

[Memorandum]

NOT ENOUGH INTELLIGENCE?

From an internal memorandum on Aldrich Ames sent in December 1990 by the Central Intelligence Agency's Counterintelligence Center to its Office of Security. The memo recommended an investigation of the "lavish spending habits" of Ames, then a counterintelligence agent for the CIA. No specific investigation of Ames was undertaken as a result of the memo; twelve days after it was written, Ames gave Russian intelligence agents the name of a new CIA informant inside the KGB. The memo was released by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in August.

The Counterintelligence Center has learned the following information about Aldrich Ames and his spouse, Rosario C. Ames:

On September 6, 1989, Ames and his spouse purchased a home located in Arlington, Virginia, for $540,000. There is no record of a mortgage filed with Arlington County. A credit check conducted in September 1990 also failed to disclose a mortgage. Ames and his spouse lived in an apartment prior to the purchase of the above home.

In November 1989, Ames was renovating the kitchen of his new home and redecorating. He was sparing no expense.

Upon his return from Rome in July 1989, Ames purchased a white Jaguar. The automobile is valued at approximately $49,500.

On August 1, 1989, Ames exchanged $22,107 worth of Italian lira at First Virginia Bank in Arlington.

On February 19, 1986, Ames deposited $13,500 into a checking account at Dominion Federal Bank in Vienna, Virginia.

On October 18, 1985, Ames deposited $15,660 at Dominion Federal Bank.

Although we are certainly concerned with the above information, there may be a logical explanation for Ames's spending habits. Between 1985 and 1990, Ames's mother died. We do not know if Ames received any money or property from insurance or an inheritance. A review of public records in the county where his mother lived could answer the question of inheritance. Unfortunately, we do not know the location of his mother's last residence. We have been informed that Ames's mother's obituary was listed in the *Washington Post*. She was formerly employed as a teacher in Fairfax County.

The money could also have come from his in-laws. Ames's in-laws were well-connected politically in Colombia.

There is a degree of urgency involved in our re-



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said than done. Especially when you're busy making ends meet today. With low-cost tax-deferred investment programs, insurance coverage, and personal savings plans, TIAA-CREF can help make things a lot easier for you. Just ask the 1.7 million people we're helping build a safe, secure future. So before one of your kids celebrates another birthday, call 1 800 226-0147 for a free Personal Investing Kit, and see what we can do for you. TIAA-CREF Financial services exclusively for people in education and research.

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him to do without giving him greater access. It is our hope to at least get Ames through polygraph before we are forced to take such action.

[Documentary]

THE INTIMACY SWAT TEAM

From a biography of Joe and Henry Gantz, distributed to the press by View Film and Video, the Calabasas, California, television- and film-production

The work of brother team Joe and Henry Gantz explores the most intimate aspects of relationships and families. Their talent lies in their ability to get real people to open up for the camera in sensitive and vulnerable situations. They photography, and writ emotional moments of real people's lives.

Couples Arguing, coproduced by Channel 4 in England, shows real couples in the midst of ac homes. To cre ate this documentary the crew wore beepers and were on call twenty-four hours a day for three When argue, they called the crew and then waited in separate rooms until the crew arrived. Using a mobile

In Search of Love and Fame is a pilot the Gantz brothers recently produced in cooperation with HBO Independent Productions. This reality se make it in Hollywood. Video crews are on call night and day to capture the subjects' every move, from personal crisis to professional triumph and failure.

photographs. In order to take these photographs for couples who "sincerely love each other." When tender moment they beeped Joe, and he would rush over to their apartment with his camera.

[Manual]

BLEEDING HEART OF DARKNESS

From a manual issued by Maxus Ecuador Inc., a subsidiary of a Texas-based oil company, to its employees who work in Ecuador on land inhabited by the Waorani, a native tribe.

You work for Maxus. You are a guest in Waorani territory. They expect you to show absolute respect for their customs, their belongings, their families, and especially their women.

All contacts with the Waorani should be avoided. However, if you have an unforeseen encounter with a Wao, keep calm. Remember that, in general, the Waorani are always armed with spears and shotguns for protection and hunting and that they speak loudly and make many gestures. You should not think that these are signs of attack. Do not show fear or make any gesture that might seem aggressive. Tell the Wao that you are his friend and, looking at his face, repeat these words: "Waponi, amigo Waorani, boto Maxus." ("Greetings, Waorani friend, I am Maxus.") Report to your supervisor so that he can talk to the Wao and resolve the situation.

The Waorani believe in common ownership. For them, everything belongs to everyone. Their concept of private property is not the same as ours. If you understand this idea, then you will also understand why they come to the camps and working areas and ask you for things. We are in their territory, and they consider our belongings to be for common use. Do not keep food in the open. To find food and not to take it is unthinkable for the Waorani. If there are any requests for tools, objects, or food, contact Maxus Community Relations personnel immediately. If the demand is urgent, offer the Waorani some food.

The Waorani's past is full of violence: tribal wars, fights with trespassers, and fights for personal revenge. Although nowadays the Waorani are better aligned with Western customs, they still firmly believe that an offense must be avenged and that, like good hunters, they must defend their women, territory, animals, and farms.

Like all human beings, the Waorani are jealous about women. Any insinuation could be interpreted as flirting. You must treat Waorani women the same way you would like strangers to treat your own wife and daughters.

You offend a Wao if you make a promise that you do not keep. Never offer something that you cannot give, and never lie just to get rid of a problem. Say simply "No" or "Wait, let me ask if I can do this."

If you offend a Wao, he will never argue back; he will merely go away quietly. However, he might return without your knowledge for the purpose of killing. A Wao never threatens; he takes direct action.

You must respect the Waorani culture. Do not offend the Waorani and do not lie to them. Your life and your work depend on it. We and they are equals; our differences are in our respective cultures and histories. Maxus has confidence in you.

[Essay]

THE PERSISTENCE OF THE FRONTIER

From "The Adventures of the Frontier in the Twentieth Century," by Patricia Nelson Limerick, in The Frontier in American Culture, *to be published this month by the University of California Press, in conjunction with an exhibit at Chicago's Newberry Library. Limerick teaches history at the University of Colorado; she is the author of* The Legacy of Conquest.

The year 1988 marked the fortieth anniversary of humanity's escape from zippers and buttons. In May of that year the science magazine *Discover* published an article commemorating the occasion. "Velcro," the headline read, "The Final Frontier." To a specialist in western American history, such as myself, this is a title to ponder. In what sense might Velcro constitute a frontier?

In his landmark 1893 essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," Frederick Jackson Turner offered a clear and concrete definition: the frontier was a place occupied by fewer than two people per square mile. Thus, if the headline writer followed Turner's definition, the Velcro Frontier would be a place where fewer than two people per square mile used Velcro. The writer, on the other hand, might have been following one of the more poetic and less precise Turnerian definitions, finding in a society's choice of fasteners a symbolic line between wilderness and human culture, backwardness and progress, savagery and civilization. The habit-bound users of zippers would now represent the primitive and backward people of North America, with the hardy, adventurous users of Velcro living on the cutting edge of progress.

Historians of the American West might puzzle over the shifting definitions of the word "frontier," but few readers experience any confusion when they see this headline. To them, the frontier analogy says simply that makers, marketers, and users of Velcro stand on the edge of exciting possibilities. Velcro is a frontier because Velcro has thousands of still-to-be-imagined uses. To most Americans in the twentieth century, the term "frontier" is perfectly clear.

"Frontier," the historian David Wrobel writes, "has become a metaphor for promise, progress, and ingenuity." And yet the relationship between the frontier and the American mind is not a simple one. Clear and predictable on some occasions, the idea of the frontier is filled with a history of sudden twists and shifts of meaning.

One confusing vision of the frontier can be found where it is reconstructed: at Disneyland's Frontierland. There is, for instance, the question of the frontier's geographical location. On one side of a path, a roller coaster rushes through a mine that is carved into a southwestern mesa. On the other side of the path, the great river, with its stately steamboat, rolls by. Where is the frontier? Evidently where New Mexico borders on the

[Press Release]

CASHING IN ON O. J., RELUCTANTLY

From a press release issued on July 5 by Signature Rookies, a Fleetville, Pennsylvania, company that manufactures sports trading cards.

On June 3, 1994, only days before the murders of Nicole Simpson and Ronald Goldman, O. J. Simpson signed a contract with Signature Rookies stating that he will personally hand-sign one thousand trading cards. In consultation today with his agent, Signature Rookies was assured that O. J. intends to sign the cards regardless of current circumstances.

Obviously, Signature Rookies is affected by these latest events. It is truly a tragic situation for all parties involved. Although we are uncomfortable with the circumstances, we have decided to affirm our contract with Simpson. O. J. was selected for inclusion in the Signature Rookies series based on his achievements on the football field. Simpson's alleged criminal and judicial system *should not* and *will not* negate Simpson's status as one of the greatest athletes ever to play the game.

The Signature Rookies product containing O. J. Simpson cards can be found at local baseball/hobby stores. Card industry experts speculate that these cards could become the most valuable

BRAND

Country Music Market Update," no. 2, a newsletter published by Country Music Magazine, *[illegible] data supplied by the Simmons Market Research Bureau,* Country Music *compared the buying patterns of country-music fans with those of the nation as a whole; an "index" score of 100 represents the average nationwide consumption of a given brand.*

Products that country-music buyers are most likely to purchase

	Index
[illegible] Chicken	265
Kibbles 'N Bits 'N Gravy dog food	262
Memorex audio-recording tapes	245
Chevy trucks	228
British Sterling cologne	228
Slim-Fast diet meal replacement	223
Purina Cat Chow	216
Sun Country wine coolers	208
Diet cherry RC Cola	204
Cool Ranch Doritos	202
A & W restaurant meals	195
Wild Turkey whiskey	189
[illegible]	189
Stetson cologne	188
Bud Light	184
Wrangler jeans	176
Winston cigarettes	175

Products that country-music buyers are least likely to purchase

	Index
Sergio Valente jeans	26
[illegible]	32
[illegible]	33
Denaka vodka	35
[illegible] Laurent aftershave	35
[illegible] Steam beer	38
[illegible]	49
American Express Gold Card	58
[illegible]	[illegible]

Mossy [illegible] western gold and silver [illegible]

[illegible] the entrance [illegible] visitors can take firearms in

[illegible] and shoot at a variety of targets—including a railroad train, winding its way through a sculpted landscape. But if you are shooting at a [illegible] who—in this frontier role-playing—are you? Which side are you on? If you are firing at the train, then you seem to be either a hostile Indian or a murderous and larcenous outlaw. What is going on here? Is the visitor receiving an invitation to play with point of view, to reconsider the whole question of the identity and interests of good guys and bad guys, champions of progress and opponents of progress? Or is this casting of the railroad as target simply an attempt by Disneyland's designers to create a scene chockfull of the shapes and forms that will say "frontier," with the assumption that any visitor so stimulated visually will fall into step with the mythic patterns of frontier life, pick up a gun, and blast away at whatever is in sight?

Clearly, the work of academic historians has had virtually no impact either on Disneyland's vision of the frontier or on the thinking of Disneyland's visitors. That cheerful and complete indifference to the work of frontier historians may, in truth, be the secret of the place's success.

Academic historians have devoted a great deal of time to questioning, clarifying, debunking, asserting, denying, and defending the usefulness of the term "frontier." I myself have pitched headfirst into this fray, directing at the f-word every kind of argument and objection I could imagine. The idea of the frontier is ethnocentric, placing Anglo-Americans at the center of the story and placing everyone else at the edges. It is, moreover, a term that breaks down into great fuzziness when one tries to define its beginning and ending. Perhaps most important, this is a word coated with a thick and impermeable layer of associations accumulated from James Fenimore Cooper, dime novels, western movies, and Marlboro cigarette advertisements. With this indissoluble coating of stale imagery, the word "frontier," I have said on many occasions, uses you before you can use it.

And yet, in early middle age, one winces at the prospect of living the rest of one's life as a broken record; my opposition to the term is weakening. Some of my newfound flexibility on this subject comes, I confess, from the personal experience of having to teach a survey course on American history. Repeatedly during the course, in front of a hundred students, I would encounter a dilemma of expression. I would want to refer to the white people living at the edge of the colonial Pennsylvania settlement or to refer to the settlers living with Daniel Boone in Kentucky. I would, in other words, pretty clearly want to say the f-word. But I had a public posi-



"Buffalo Medicine," by John Nieto, part of a one-man show on display last May at J. Cacciola Galleries, in New York City. Nieto lives in Corrales, New Mexico

tion to uphold, and I would *not* say the f-word. The result was that I sometimes took a sentence or two to say what others could say with a single adjective or noun.

These episodes gave me unexpected empathy with the addicted users of the word "frontier," and that empathy provides the bedrock for the explanation behind the truce of terminology I now offer. But the other part of the explanation lies in a recognition of the shared hopelessness, powerlessness, and defeatedness of our positions. Scholars who are holding on to the use of the word "frontier" and scholars who have rejected it hold one thing in common: the public is paying absolutely no attention to either of us. Look wherever you like — Disney's Frontierland, newspaper headlines, book titles, politicians' speeches, promotional literature for NASA — and it is perfectly evident that the public has a very clear understanding of the word "frontier" and that this understanding has no relation at all to the definitional struggling of contemporary historians.

Consider, for instance, the Alaskan license plate. Alaska is a state with an enormous amount of unpopulated land, but it is also a state where the vast majority of the people live not outdoors in nature, but in cities. In that very urbanized state, each automobile sports a license plate with the words "Alaska: The Last Frontier." Not a single one of the drivers, I am willing to bet, understands this to mean "Alaska: The Last Zone of Cultural Interpenetration and Contested Hegemony."

Many historians have recently lamented "the disuniting of America" through the expansion of multicultural history. We hear frequent expressions of nostalgia for an imagined era of unity, before an emphasis on race, class, and gender divided Americans into contesting units and interests. But matters are by no means so disunited as the lamenters think. When African American civil-rights leaders comfortably refer to themselves as "pioneers," when Rev. Jesse Jackson defines his campaign to end violence by blacks against blacks as "the new frontier of the civil-rights movement," then the idea of the frontier and the pioneer have clearly become a kind of multicultural common property. Logic and history say that the frontier was a place where violence served the cause of racial subordination, but a more powerful emotional understanding says that the frontier is where people of courage have gone to take a stand for the right and the good. As encounters with scholars from other countries demonstrate, this is not just multicultural, this is international. Many people from the Philippines, from Senegal and Thailand—people with plenty of reasons to resent the frontier men-

plants, industrial product development, musical in-

crammed with nationalistic self-congrat

recognized and laden with positive associations.

Historians may hope that eventually—perhaps sometime in the next century—the popu-

and its consequences. But for now we will have to settle for the reality: that whether or not it suits

works as a cultural glue—a mental and emotional fastener that, in some very curious and unexpected ways, holds us together.

[Editors' Note]

DEATH BE NOT WELL-ENDOWED

Hustler Busty Beauties is a sexy, fun-filled fantasy magazine, but we can't ignore the grim realities of life. Our editorial staff agonized over whether to publish a posthumous photo set of

was good taste during a painful period for her

friends, and fans, we chose not to run the

Indeed, 1993 was a tragic year for all of us.

Candi Centerfolds, showcased in our April 1992

printed. Her three ladies brought much joy to

families and loved ones.

WHERE THE GHOULS ARE

From The National Directory of Haunted Places, *by Dennis William Hauck, published by Athanor Press in Sacramento, California. The directory contains background information and travel directions for more than 2,000 locations in the United States "where something strange and unexplainable is happening."*

Stoner House, Dark Harbor, Maine

No matter how many times the carpet is replaced in the parlor of this wood-frame house, it lumps up in the center of the room and blood stains appear on the surface. The phenomenon has plagued several families since 1900, when Salathiel Stoner owned the house. Stoner met Amanda Carter in Falls Church, Virginia, and brought her back to Maine to be his wife. Amanda hated her husband's austere house and begged him for a carpet for the cold parlor floor. After months of nagging and violent arguments, Salathiel sailed to Bangor and brought back a beautiful, red-rose carpet. But as he laid it in the parlor and started to nail it down, his wife told him that she hated the carpet as much as she hated him. In a blind fury, Salathiel raised his hammer and beat Amanda bloody. Then he proceeded to nail down the carpet right over her body. Bleeding profusely, Amanda spent two days under the carpet before she finally expired. Salathiel ignored the hump in his parlor carpet even when friends came to visit. He was committed to an insane asylum in Portland, but the house has not forgotten his deed.

Kellner House, San Diego, California

When Peggy Kellner bought this bungalow in 1964, she had no idea that the house was already occupied by the spirit of a former owner, Victoria Magee. The ghost communicates her decorating tastes by smashing statues and turning pictures she does not like to the wall. She bangs cabinet doors and throws objects across the room if a man stays overnight or if guests play Monopoly. Her apparition once appeared to a visiting accountant who was idly strumming an antique harp while waiting to see Peggy. The ghost said to her, "Don't do that, just go sit

and left so quickly that she

Grammercy, New York City

The phantom of an alcoholic Madison Avenue advertising executive, who committed suicide, leaves empty martini glasses on the bar here and scribbles ad slogans on the walls.



Masked Parents with Baby," by Mariette Pathy Allen. From Masked Culture: The Greenwich Village Halloween arade, *to be published this month by Columbia University Press. Allen lives in New York City.*

Cannon Beach, Oregon

The phantom of a man completely wrapped in bandages haunts this small community. The bloody figure, who smells of rotting flesh, jumps into vehicles passing on a road outside of town. Bandage Man has appeared in pickup trucks, sedans, station wagons, and even sports cars. Sometimes the mummy breaks windows or leaves behind bits of foul-smelling bandages. Some believe he is the ghost of a dead logger cut to pieces in a sawmill accident.

Bodie State Historic Park, Bodie, California

A former maid, a heavyset oriental lady, is said to haunt the J. S. Cain House. She likes to pin down sleeping people by sitting on their legs.

Delta Sigma Phi, Manhattan, Kansas

The ghosts that walk the halls of this fraternity house are spirits from St. Mary's Hospital, which owned the building at one time. The most active phantom is named George, an elderly patient whose one love was watching *Star Trek*. George died when he rolled off his bed in a third-floor room and was wedged against the wall, where he suffocated; his noisy ghost is still heard on the third floor. In 1973, during an ice storm that knocked out power for several days, the electricity at Delta Sigma Phi mysteriously came on just long enough to watch *Star Trek* on TV.

[Urban Legends]

THE INTERNET'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT

From the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) file for alt.folklore.urban, a news group on the Internet in which readers post urban legends and discuss their veracity. Terry Chan, an economist in Berkeley, California, maintains the FAQ; using sources cited by readers, he determines whether the legends are true, false, or "unanswerable" and then adds them to the list excerpted below. The news group has about 150,000 readers a month.

A penny falling from the top of the Empire State Building will embed itself in the pavement. *(False)*

Microwaving pantries kills yeast infections. *(Believed false but not conclusively proven)*

Bubbles in bubble [illegible] contain cheap but toxic gas. *(False)*

You can send a coconut through the mail without any further wrapping. *(True)*

If the entire population of China jumped up and down at the same time, (a) the earth's orbit would be disturbed or (b) the entire U.S. would be swamped by [illegible]

Well [illegible] can cause them to stick to your eyeballs. *(False)*



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7 billion in general insurance net loss and loss adjustment reserves. Our record of profitability is unsurpassed
the industry, and we hold the highest ratings from the principal rating services. The AIG Companies have the
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[illegible] served as a sniper in Vietnam [illegible] (*It's possible that his dad did*)

[illegible] attack during act. People [illegible] (*False*)

[illegible] is a hermaphrodite. (*False*)

[illegible] commits suicide, your get automatic A's in your courses. (*False*)

Students found rolled-up carpet; unrolled it in dorm room to find dead body. (*Believed true but*

Student killed self during exam by putting two pencils in nose and hitting desk. (*Believed false but not conclusively proven*)

Albert Einstein did poorly in school. (*False*)

Three Men and a Baby has a scene with a real ghost in it. (*False*)

Child's foot or leg was amputated after pumping Reebok shoes too tight. (*Believed false but not conclusively proven*)

Family visited wilderness park. They saw bears and wanted to get "cute pics" of bear with child, so they smeared honey on child's cheek. Bear ate child's face. (*Believed false but not conclusively proven*)

Actress who played Jan or Cindy Brady was a porn star. (*False*)

Sesame Street's Bert and Ernie are gay. (*False*)

Koalas are always stoned/drunk from the alcohol in eucalyptus leaves. (*False*)

Koalas, being filled with eucalyptus oil, explode in brushfires. (*False*)

Mikey from Life cereal commercials exploded from eating Pop Rocks with soda. (*False*)

Unless marked "dairy," fast-food shakes aren't milk but mostly carrageen gel. (*True*)

Green M&Ms are an aphrodisiac. (*False*)

Some people like to eat the placenta of their children. (*True*)

Bubble Yum bubble gum is made with spider eggs. (*False*)

There were at least two different endings to *Old Yeller* filmed. (*Believed true but not conclusively proven*)

A woman was impregnated while swimming by sperm loose in pool. (*False*)

A town in Oregon banned all sex. (*Believed true but not conclusively proven*)

Little Mermaid video cover features clear drawing of penis. (*True*)

Candy manufacturers sneakily micro-reduce size of products to rip you off. (*Believed true but not conclusively proven*)

Unification Church (i.e., Moonies) owns Entenmann's bakery. (*False*)

Several noted movies have "death curses" on them. (*Unanswered and may be unanswerable*)

You can tell if a big operation is under way in the White House by level of pizza orders. (*False*)

Schoolkid beheaded by road sign after he stuck his head out the bus window. (*Believed false but not conclusively proven*)

Oregon Highway Division blew up eight-ton dead whale; showered town with blubber. (*Believed true but not conclusively proven*)

A congressional page or an elevator operator asked U.S. Representative Fred "*Love Boat*" Grandy, "Lido Deck, sir?" or "Promenade Deck, sir?" and was subsequently fired. (*False*)

[Elegy]

JOHN CANDY'S BIGGEST FAN SAYS FAREWELL

From "A Final Farewell: A Personal Meeting with John Candy," by Lyle, in the June/July issue of Big-Ad, *a magazine "for full-framed men," published in San Francisco.*

Friday, March 4, 1994, the day John Candy died, will forever be a black day. For many of us, especially the community of large men, the death was a great shock. John Candy was an important man; through the many films he made he helped spread a positive image of large men. He showed us all that being fat shouldn't stop you from living your life or fulfilling your dreams.

As for me, I lost an actor whom I'd come to love and admire. I take solace, however, in the memory of having met this wonderful man. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity—however brief—to shake his hand, look him in the eyes, and say, "Hello."

I remember the day well. A friend of mine owns a movie theater here in Los Angeles. John was coming to view some film footage from a movie in which he was appearing. It was a private screening for John and a couple of producers. Knowing how much I liked John Candy, my friend invited me to come to the theater. Since no outsiders were allowed, he told me to stand behind the concession stand and act like I worked there. The producers arrived first, and we were introduced. They were nice enough, but meeting them was not the reason I drove halfway across town to pose as a concession attendant.

After a few minutes of anticipation the moment arrived. I saw a long, black Mercedes pull up outside. Immediately I knew it must be him: this was the kind of luxury only a chubby could appreciate. Peering out from behind the concession stand, I couldn't quite make out who was behind the wheel, but my instincts turned out

The Mazda 929 A fine artist gave the Mazda 929 luxury sedan its [illegible]

it promises an elegantly smooth driving experience. And while the 929 certainly lives up to that promise, it

d with features one might not expect to find standard on any automobile. Such as a 24-valve V6 engine, the comfort of leather

d automatic climate control. The added security of anti-lock brakes, dual air bags, our 36-month/50,000-mile, "bumper-to-

mper" warranty and 24-hour Emergency Roadside Assistance.* All under one moonroof. Which, incidentally, is also standard



to the concession stand. After all, what's a movie without popcorn? Imagine my surprise to see that big, happy face coming to greet me—the face that hung on my bedroom wall every time I got my hands on a new picture or poster from his lat-

was John Candy! I tried to keep my composure as he drew near. Seizing the opportunity, my friend who owned the theater—my best buddy in the whole world—ran over and introduced us. John greeted me with a smile and a "pleased to meet you." Then he extended his pudgy hand,

and I mine. His soft, warm flesh encircled mine, gently but firmly—the kind of hand a young child yearns to hold as he walks alongside a big, friendly giant and looks up at his kind face and deep eyes; the kind of hand that offers security and warmth within its soft, padded grasp.

I looked deep into his eyes, studying every line and crease of his familiar face. I felt as if I'd known him my whole life; I felt close to him, as if he were a friend or an uncle. John got down to the business at hand. He gazed at the menu like a kid in a candy store, that childlike face beaming with delight as he scanned the candy counter, struggling with the decision of which soda to choose.

"Hmmm. Orange Crush or Welch's grape? I'll take a grape." Chuckling. "Guess I'm just a big kid."

"I guess you are," I said with a smile.

His attention was diverted to the candy bars. As his mouth watered with anticipation, I watched closely, again studying his face, hands, body—every move memorized, every twitch recorded. He leaned in closer over the counter—close enough for me to smell his hair and gaze directly into his eyes. I'm sure he noticed my stare. And for a moment I thought I noticed him inch in a bit closer, glancing out of the corner of his eye. So subtle. I'm still not sure if it really happened or if, in my excitement, I merely imagined it. In any case, John made his selection in earnest. I happily served him his candy and popcorn, paying particular attention to that brief moment when our hands touched as I passed him his drink. And then off he waddled into the theater, the two producers following with a special padded chair to support his extra girth.

A short while after the movie started, I decided to take a peek through the curtain to see what they were watching. There was John, sitting in his chair in the aisle. I watched him for a moment, his genuine smile and big, hearty laugh—nothing was forced. As I approached him, I imagined myself as a younger boy, crawling up onto his knee to watch the film.

I leaned in close. "Another soda, Mr. Candy?"

"Yes, thank you," he said, his voice resonating with the pleasure of an elated child.

I obliged his request. Later, as the group filed out of the theater, John gave me a friendly wave. The warmth I felt gave me the urge to just give him a big hug and squeeze him tight. There was so much I wanted to say, but I didn't know where to begin. Soon it was too late. He walked past with a smile and a nod.

He got into his expensive Mercedes; I got into my beat-up heap—each of us reentering his own world. In an instant the moment had passed, not unlike his life: there one moment; the next, gone forever.

A TEEN SPIRIT?

In your July issue you had an editorial about

er with Kurt on it, along with two of my friends, Josh and Jess Stewert. Ever since we did this Josh

else, and I have had a

in a dream and so has my friend Josh. Keep in



Men Confused About Spelling of New Movie," by Andrew Savulich, part of Urban Realities: Spot News and treet Photography, *a one-man show on display last spring at the International Center of Photography in New York ity. Savulich is a staff photographer for the New York City* Daily News.

[Essay]

I AM MAUVE, HEAR ME ROAR

From The Apartheid of Sex: A Manifesto on the Freedom of Gender, *by Martine Aliana Rothblatt, to be published in February by Crown. Rothblatt, a transsexual, is an attorney in Washington, D.C.*

The division of humanity into two sexes is the most long-standing and rigidly enforced of all social stereotypes. For countless millennia, people have been grouped as male or female based on their genitals and then socialized into masculine or feminine stereotypes. As we approach the twenty-first century, however, evidence is mounting that our sexual identities are as unique as our personalities. In fact, there is no socially meaningful characteristic that defines humanity in terms of two absolute groups, men and women. There is, instead, a continuum of sex types, ranging from very male to very female, with countless variations in between.

To identify the meaningful elements of sexual identity it is necessary to abandon entirely the male/female, masculine/feminine lexicon. Such terminology obscures the true genital-independent nature of sexual identity. Hence an entirely new vocabulary is needed.

For analytic purposes, shades of color may provide a useful vocabulary for dissecting sexual identity. First, color comes in an infinite number of hues, allowing us to represent an infinite number of sexual identities. Second, the infinite hues can be grouped into chromatic categories. This permits a scientific classification of similar sexual identities. Third, colors can be combined to create blends. In the rainbow lexicon of sexuality, the aggressive element of sexual identity may be represented as yellow, the nourishing element as blue, and the erotic element as red. From these primary colors, an infinite array of sexual identities can be chromatically grouped.

The following table provides a chromatic sexual identity for each self-reported mental nature:

Green: An equally aggressive/nurturing person who does not try to appear sexy.

Lime-Green: A slightly (about one-third) nourishing but mostly (about two-thirds) aggressive person who does not try to appear sexy.

Orange: A non-nourishing person who describes themself as equally aggressive and erotic.

Brown: A person equally aggressive, nourishing, and sexy in attitude.

Black: A complexly [illegible] person who feels all elements of gender [illegible] constantly melan[illegible]



WHAT HAS ALL THI

Five years ago, Adelphi began an advertising campaign that sought to raise basic questi about higher education in today's world.

Sometimes we used irony to do that, and sometimes we managed to irritate even our b friends, because we did not believe a serious subject need always be approached solemnly.

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We at Adelphi believe we have the seriousness and boldness required to accomplish w many educators and commentators claim is an impossible task – truly educating today's dents: teaching them not only what they must know, but what matters; teaching them the h

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It's education in Cambridge, just across the river from Boston, may not promise the Museum of Modern Art, Lincoln Center, Broadway or the United Nations. But it holds its own against Adelphi's campus, which is less than an hour from New York City.

And don't overlook Harvard's extracurriculars. As century old clubs and organizations are the stuff of legend, along the lines of the Adelphi athletic department. No less than three Adelphi Panther teams currently hold rankings in the national top ten.

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date seven different levels

343 (7 x 7 x 7) chromatically named genders,

shades of purple, orange, green, and brown. Some

with dynamic gender complexity. And all of us can change our gender during our life. Far from being

[Announcement]

WHEN A MAN LOVES A SHAMAN

weddings and ceremonies, in the June 10 Seattle

Intonship in a joining ceremony, following Jim's

e. The tribal cere-

LeatherKim, Emily,

an Earth Mother clad in a pewter breastplate

ntol Hill their home

trapped for life as men or women, we can evolve our chromatic sexual identities as our minds grow and develop. Anatomically, we may have penises or vaginas, testicles or ovaries. Sexually, we are a rainbow of color, a spectrum of gender.

[Essay]

THE HOROSCOPE

By Marco Lodoli. This excerpt, translated from the Italian by John Satriano, is drawn from Lodoli's novel Cramps, *published by Einaudi, in Turin, Italy. An excerpt from Lodoli's previous novel,* The Ambassador, *appeared in the January 1992 issue of* Harper's Magazine. Cramps *will be published this month in a different English translation by Quartet Books in London. Lodoli lives in Rome.*

Every day a certain man reads his horoscope. He firmly believes in the conjunctions of the stars, in the energy that the planets sprinkle over him. He trusts the celestial maps sketched out carefully by the astrologers and even somewhat trusts those three or four lines that the newspapers publish every day. He is grateful to the telescopes that have tracked down the most hidden constellations and to the compasses that have pinned them down in the charts, to the people who understand and explain them. He knows that for a long time Saturn has been occupying his heaven, that Venus is personally against him: he knows that he is sad in the evening. He leaves his seaside house near Ostia, looks at those infinite luminous points painted in the firmament, and knows that he is sad. He has lost a woman, Maria of the slanting eyes, and at night desolate and overpowering dreams occupy his bed, and during the day things inevitably twist out of shape. "It is the energy of the cosmos that is bending adversely toward me," he thinks, "it is Venus and Saturn," and at times he thinks he will surely die soon, so great is the strain. He no longer takes care of himself, he doesn't bother with the spots on his clothes, the bags of trash in the kitchen and front room, the dirt under his fingernails, the overturned photographs. The thing he is absolutely unable to imagine is that, at a distance for which measurement does not

galaxy, his sadness is extinguishing a constellation: his actions and thoughts rebound as far as that, that is how deeply they cut. And every day, spirits that cannot be described in our words watch him. He is their frightening horoscope. They read his restless movements along the seashore, near Ostia, hoping that Maria of the slanting eyes will soon return into the first house.



Norbert Rosing. From Aurora: The Mysterious Northern Lights, *by Candace Savage, published by Sierra Club Books*

[Essay]

VISITING AUSCHWITZ

Adapted from A Chosen Few: The Resurrection of European Jewry, *by Mark Kurlansky, to be published next month by Addison-Wesley. A different version of this essay appeared in the Spring issue of* Partisan Review. *Kurlansky is a journalist living in Paris.*

I just got another one in the mail, the third in a year: a picture postcard of a cemetery. All three cards were of the same Jewish cemetery, and each was sent by a Jew, as though this were the way Jews keep in touch—sending pictures of a graveyard. The cemetery is in Prague, and, yes, it is a picturesque and historic cemetery. But a block away is Europe's oldest functioning synagogue, and although postcards of it are available, nobody has sent me one.

In the past five years most Central European Jewish communities have grown, as assimilated Jews have begun to reassert their Jewish heritage. The Budapest community is now thought to include 120,000 members, 20,000 more than in 1989. In the past year the struggling Prague community has increased from 1,000 registered members to 1,300.

But Western Jews go to Central Europe to see death. Since the fall of Communism and the opening of borders to easy, visa-free travel, the growth of Jewish communities has attracted far less interest than the newly accessible concentration camps and cemeteries. Thus Poland, which has more Jewish history but less Jewish life than its neighbors, has become a popular destination for foreign Jews, many of whom profess a hatred for Poland and yet still must see the cemeteries and death camps.

This new obsession is a very un-Jewish thing. There is probably no religion that is less concerned with death. Cemeteries are not supposed to be next to synagogues, because life and death are to be separated. Descendants of priests, the Cohanim, are not to gaze on dead bodies or walk in cemeteries. Christianity, in its Jewish infancy, had as its symbol a fish, signifying the life of Peter; only later, not coincidentally as Christians broke away from Judaism, did they take on the cross, an implement of torture, the symbol of Jesus' agony and martyrdom. I sometimes wonder, as I watch Poland's lucrative new tourist industry, if Judaism is not undergoing a similar transformation.

No one goes to Poland to take in the countryside. The draw is Poland's embarrassment of riches in the field of Holocaust history. Foreigners

come to see what is left of the Warsaw ghetto, the Jewish cemeteries, and the death camps: Sobibór, Majdanek, Belzec, Treblinka, Chelmno, Stutthof, Auschwitz-Birkenau. So many tourists are Jewish [illegible] little carved Hasidim dolls less anti-Semitic in order to move them — make the eyes a little less sunken and demonic and ease up on the nose.

[illegible] tourist center mostly because of its location: it is only a thirty-minute taxi ride from the most famous death camp of them all, which attracts some half a million visitors a year. When tourists [illegible] the platform by eager taxi drivers offering, "Taxi? Hotel? Auschwitz?" When a driver gets an Auschwitz fare he merrily informs the others at the stand, "I'm off to Auschwitz!"

[illegible] extremely jovial, a breach of etiquette for which I instantly [illegible] Mercedes and I talked about what a great car a Mercedes is.

"Yes, the perfect way to go to Auschwitz," I said.

He slammed the dashboard good-humoredly, repeated the joke, and laughed.

[illegible] operating — rolling farmland, yellow strips of harvested hayfields, orchards of branches drooping with the weight of summer apples, towns with tra[illegible] the wide railroad yard, a junction of so many tracks that it appears to be the outskirts of a major city. The Germans were said to have chosen the spot because of its rail connections. For all [illegible] people living there, the majority of whom were Jews. There is said to be one Jew left in Oswiecim, and he, not surprisingly, is a recluse.

Outside the death camp is a parking lot filled with tour buses. Then there is a bookshop and a snack bar and a pretty green spot with rows of two-story brick barracks. Many of the barracks have been turned into national pavilions, each [illegible] tal documentary style, others seeming almost art[illegible] genocide. Every institution with any pretense of moral authority wants the last word on Auschwitz, and there is an international committee that is eternally debating what to do with it. The place remains incomprehensible and its questions as unan[illegible] fall to the greatest victims, who were the Jews. As Polish Jewish journalist Konstanty Gebert said, [illegible] "If we, on the pinnacle of suffering there, is room for just one." The problem is that [illegible] ere is very little a truly moral voice can say. Meanwhile, Auschwitz survivors do their duty and sit on the committee, forced not only to think about but to visit the site of their nightmares.

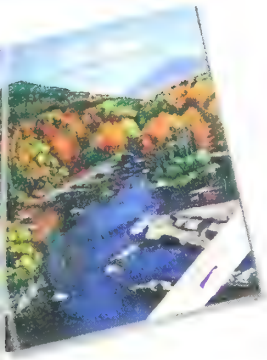
Auschwitz shows things that are beyond commentary—human hair, eyeglass frames, piles of toothbrushes, an unremarkable-looking oven, gallows where prisoners were hanged and walls where they were shot and laboratories where they were worked on. Somehow families drift through this. Many of the visitors weep. Others look stunned. Some look like bored tourists shuffling from exhibit to exhibit, taking snapshots to mark each spot. When I was through, my jovial taxi driver was waiting in the parking lot with a somber, sympathetic face. "Makes you sick, doesn't it," he said. "People shouldn't go here. I don't like this place. They killed my grandfather here." His grandfather had been among the Polish political prisoners for whom the Germans had first established the camp.

But as soon as we got away the mood was broken and he was jovial again. I liked this man now. He seemed to like life and he certainly enjoyed the drive, playing a cassette of German oom-pa-pa music, which I asked him to change. Again he slapped the dashboard and laughed at the silly irony of it, and switched to a Polish-language recording of "Now It's Time to Say Good-bye for the Summer."

Although many of the tourists at Auschwitz were Jewish and had traveled with the help of Jewish organizations, I wouldn't say I had a Jewish experience there. I would say I had a Nazi experience. There is a need to preserve such places precisely because there is a need to understand what Nazis were, what they did. I don't think Jews are the people who most need this. But they are the ones who are experiencing it the most frequently. There seems to be a tremendous confusion about who defines what a Jew is. How often is a Jewish lecture, a Jewish film, or a Jewish book not about the Holocaust? I have for the past two years been working on a book about European Jewry. People constantly assume I am writing about the Holocaust. No, I say, this is contemporary. They look at me with confusion. I see them thinking, "What is there to say about contemporary Jews?" Then they invariably start talking to me about neo-Nazis.

I do not believe that Jews, as Gebert stated with intended irony, are owed the right to exist because they have suffered but rather because they have the right to exist. If suffering were the only legacy of Judaism, it would not be worth continuing. What forces Jews ever deeper into the dilemma of identity is historical revisionism, by

L.L.Discoveries



L.L.Change of Season



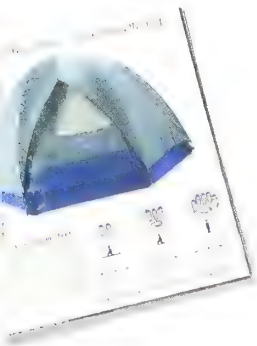
L.L.Places to Go



L.L.On the Road



L.L.Down East



L.L.Outdoors



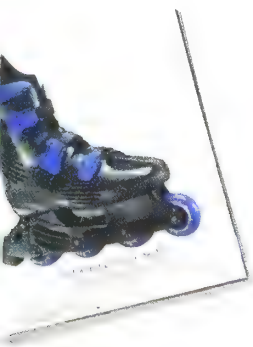
L.L.Indoors



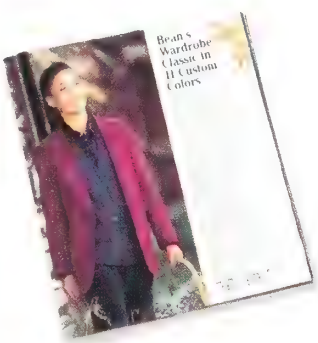
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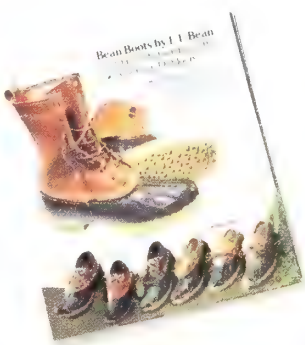
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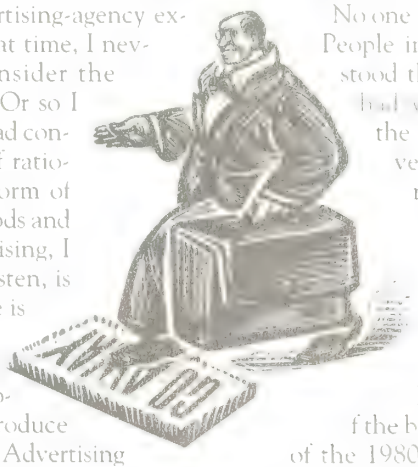
A Nation of Salesmen

Cautionary tales from the life of *Homo vendens*

By Earl Shorris

I. An End of Innocence

Beginning in 1958, I worked as a salesman. Although the companies I knew best were AT&T, N. W. Ayer, and General Motors, I had the opportunity to study selling with many organizations, both large and small, either as an employee, advertising-agency executive, or consultant. In that time, I never permitted myself to consider the meaning of the work I did: Or so I thought. I know now that I had constructed an elaborate wall of rationalizations, mostly in the form of lies, about the selling of goods and services in America. Advertising, I said to anyone who would listen, is not immoral, except as waste is immoral, for advertising is no more than a waste of time, effort, and money by people who might otherwise produce useful or even beautiful work. Advertising is largely useless, I said, an inefficient way to pay for the daily newspaper, closer to bad art than to good business.



When critics argued that advertising caused people to buy things they didn't want or need, I laughed and pointed out to them that the best sales job the advertising business had ever done was to convince its clients and critics that advertising could control people's desires. In my best Socratic fashion, I asked whether hungry people would desire food if it were not advertised.

No one in advertising disputed what I said. People in the business had always understood the power of advertising, but they had made [illegible] the bald-faced claim. After all, if advertising could control people's innermost desires, it might be necessary to regulate the business or even to ban advertising altogether. No, it was not wise to make certain [illegible] vertising; modesty was the prudent course.

It held sway through the boom years of the business, 1960–85. Then, at the end of the 1980s, my employer, Ayer, America's oldest advertising agency, became too desperate for subtlety. Deeply in debt, losing old clients and unable to find new ones, the agency abandoned any pretense of modesty. On a sign in its main re-

Earl Shorris is a contributing editor of Harper's Magazine. *This article is adapted from* A Nation of Salesmen: The Tyranny of the Market and the Subversion of Culture, *to be published this fall by W. W. Norton. Shorris is the author of ten works of fiction and non-fiction, among them the novel* Under the Fifth Sun, *reprinted recently by Norton, and* Latinos: Biography of the People, *reprinted by Avon.*

ception area Ayer proclaimed, WE CREATE YOUR

If Ayer had made advertising for a cigarette company, it would not have abandoned the industry's traditional humility, for the cigarette [illegible] billboards for Camels and other cigarettes were causing children to take up smoking, blushed at the thought of inciting desire. They insisted that advertising could do no more than lead people to switch from one brand to another. I agreed with the cigarette companies. I had always been as modest as R. J. Reynolds about the power of advertising, but only now do I realize that my modesty and theirs had exactly the same genesis: I, too, wished to be innocent.

I saw that selling, in all its forms, has achieved dominion over our world. America has become the land of the salesman, *Homo vendens*

The end of my innocence came along with the decline of N. W. Ayer and the firing of all but three of the people who had reported to me. It began in a small hearing room in the New York State Department of Labor building on 125th Street in Manhattan. A man who had been fired by my successor brought an age-discrimination suit against the corporation. The plaintiff was a pale man with a cracked voice, balding and bespectacled, a studied eccentric, a Greenwich Village man: self-published poet, accomplished advertising writer, semi-professional psychotherapist, the proprietor of the scraggles of a beard. He spoke in the precise whine of Brooklyn-born intellectuals. Once, in what must have been another world, he had walked across Europe with a rifle in his hands. This neurosis, formerly a man, had defeated panzer divisions, storm troopers, the invincible Wehrmacht. Now, dressed in his only suit and matching vest, he sought to save the last days and remaining dignity of his life. I was his chief witness, his argument, his hope.

In an age-discrimination suit, it is the victim who must prove his case. He becomes a thing, meat hung on the hook of age, frightened, the quarry of the defense lawyers. All the allies of the victim are suspect also; the presumption in such cases is that the great are more righteous than the small.

The dispute was over ethics, not business. Nevertheless, I had to explain the nature of the work the man had done and how I had assessed his performance. The judge was direct: "What did he do?" she said. "And what did you do?"

Nothing could have been more demanding. The most adept of self-deceivers cannot cheat [illegible] such a test. The hearing room was so bare, t[illegible] questions so homely, the face of the man, w[illegible] would later lose his case, so flaccid with shan[illegible] that illusion deserted me; in the middle of m[illegible] middle age I opened my eyes and saw.

I saw that selling, in all its forms, has achieve[illegible] dominion over the world in our time, not on[illegible] determining the economic spirit of the nation b[illegible] deeply affecting its social, political, cultural, ar[illegible] moral life. I saw that America has become th[illegible] land of the salesman, *Homo vendens*, who is bot[illegible] dangerous and afflicted.

Under the dominion of *Ho[illegible] mo vendens*, we are no long[illegible] free to know the world. Th[illegible] salesman now informs us. I[illegible] the mix of mind and matte[illegible] that is perception, the info[illegible] mation comes not from our senses encounte[illegible] ing reality but from the salesman. Thus we hav[illegible] lost the world.

By conceding the world to *Homo vendens*, hu[illegible] man beings enter into an agreement in which e[illegible] erything exists as part of a transaction. We a[illegible] interchangeable with things; we no longer de[illegible] termine our own worth. We have lost our hu[illegible] n. nity.

When *Homo vendens*, who recognizes himse[illegible] as merely a means, makes all people into a mean[illegible] for his use, he takes away our freedom. We hav[illegible] lost our nobility.

Under the conditions of a life dominated by *Ho[illegible] mo vendens*, an abstraction of desire, the un[illegible] thinking market, initiates action. The world n[illegible] longer begins from us; we have forfeited the au[illegible] tonomy of our own reason. We have lost ou[illegible] minds.

Do I mean to say that Americans are lunatic[illegible] living in chains? Of course not. But freedom is[illegible] fragile thing—it must be initiated every day—an[illegible] thinking is the hardest part of making peopl[illegible] free. Throughout history someone has been wait[illegible] ing to take over, sometimes with a gun, at oth[illegible] er times, as now, with a word. The ethical problen[illegible] at the end of this century is not about selling; it[illegible] the dominion of *Homo vendens* the problem i[illegible] tyranny.

Herewith, then, some cautionary tales from th[illegible] life of *Homo vendens*.

II. King Solomon in San Francisco

A salesman who tells the truth adds nothing to th[illegible] customer's knowledge of the product. (Such a sales[illegible] man would have no function.) There are practica[illegible] limits, of course. An apple cannot be successfully de[illegible] scribed as a horse. Within those limits, however, th[illegible] information is as Homo vendens *presents it; th[illegible]*

spective buyer almost always lacks the capacity to
llenge the salesman's depiction of reality.

When I was a young man, I created a silent he, a wordless, pre-swimming deception. It was a television commercial Spare Tire, which was described to me as an osol can containing a latex compound and ough air under pressure to seal a small hole d reinflate a flat tire. In the commercial a man ked into his garage, saw that a tire was flat, k a can of Spare Tire from the glove comtment of his car, sealed and reinflated his tire, into his car, and drove off. As I recall, there s one line that went something like: "One flat e, one minute, one can of Spare Tire."

The commercial won many prizes, the product d very well, and customers were pleased with as long as the can remained in the glove comtment. When they tried to fix a flat with Spare e, they found that the latex and the air ran out the same little hole that caused the flat in the t place. I never saw the product demonstrat- and I did not attend the filming of the nmercial. But I believed the manufactur- s claims, which makes of me both a fool d an accomplice.

•

In the city of Jerusalem, in the age kings, it was said by Solomon nself that "the best wine . . . es down smoothly, gliding er lips and teeth." Three ousand years later, two oafs peared on television to l their customers that rtles & Jaymes wine olers went down oothly, meshing rfectly with the reirements of the late, for the drink is both fruit and ne, sweet and tart, ld and heady. From the e of Solomon to the age of llo, there has been no essential change in the thod of selling.

On occasion the wisdom of ancient philosoers and the techniques of contemporary salesen connect across the centuries, making the ation of the disciplines astonishingly clear. he such occasion occurred in San Francisco. here were ragamuffins filled with certainties on ery streetcorner and philosophers in every coffhouse, but it was still sometimes necessary to port salesmen, as in the case of the marketing d selling of a new toy, a dollhouse whose occupants responded to a magic wand.

The problem for the owners of this triumph of American ingenuity—a magnet glued to the end of the wand attracted a piece of iron in the base of the doll—was that few people in San Francisco at this time understood the toy market, including the first and perhaps most important step, which is how to package the product. After a long and thoughtful meeting, the inventors and owners of the magical magnetic dollhouse and their advertising agency decided to import a consultant from New York. Several weeks later, with the annual New York toy show rapidly approaching and some major decisions still to be made, an elderly gentleman, Mr. Solomon from New York, arrived in San Francisco to attend a daylong meeting with the toymakers and marketers in the conference room of their advertising agency.

Mr. Solomon was treated with great deference by his clients. Bagels and cream cheese were ordered for his midmorning snack. For lunch, he said, he required a deli sandwich—corned beef, but lean. Such a sandwich, on rye, along with a half sour dill pickle and a cream soda, was brought from one of the city's two kosher delicatessens.



For Mr. Solomon's benefit a prototype of the magical magnetic dollhouse was set up on the conference table. Tiny couches, tables, lamps, chairs, and beds were placed in the proper rooms. Then each member of the resident family was introduced and moved into place by means of the magnetic wand. When the family dog was placed inside the house, a fifty-year-old advertising executive, dressed in a three-piece suit,

"Woof, woof," the executive said.

"Bark, Dexter, bark," the others said.

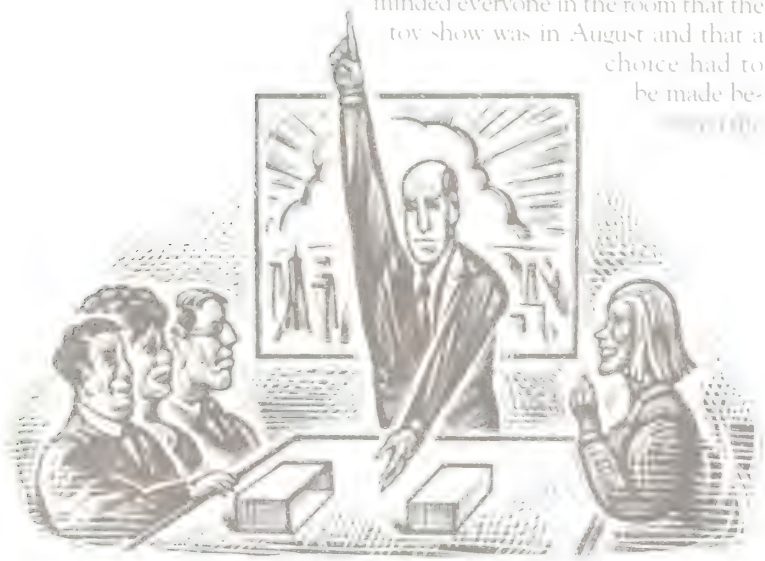
"Woof, woof," the executive said.

Mr. Solomon said nothing.

All day an argument raged over the design of the box. On one side were those who believed the box should depict the dollhouse. The others favored a picture of a delighted girl using the wand to move one of the tiny dolls. Product information or the satisfaction of desire? Which would please the parents? Which would please the children? Which would sell the most dollhouses?

Mr. Solomon, who sat in the position of honor at the head of the conference table, listened to the discussion. He did not comment. Not a word came from him while he ate his bagels. He did not speak during the eating of the delicatessen sandwich and pickle. Mr. Solomon listened. He studied the sketches, the mock-ups. Near the end of the afternoon, when the light turned gray in the financial district and the overhead lamps brought a yellow weariness into the conference room, Mr. Solomon looked at his watch. He had been promised a fee for one day of consulting and one day only. Soon he would have to be driven to the airport.

The owner of the toy-manufacturing venture saw Mr. Solomon's gesture and took the hint. He reminded everyone in the room that the toy show was in August and that a choice had to be made be-



delighted child and the beauty shot of the product. Then he turned to Mr. Solomon. "You've heard our arguments. Which shall it be?"

For one last moment Mr. Solomon pondered the question. He seemed to be reviewing the evidence presented by the proponents of each option, comparing it with his vast experience, like some great computer sorting information. Then the venerable mediator raised his right arm, extending it straight up from the shoulder. His eyes were clear, his jaw was firm, his nose a prow of intelligence cutting into the windstorm of dis tation. It was, in the parlance of San Francis a Zen moment. Mr. Solomon lowered his toward the table, his fingertips describing a gr arc. As his arm descended, he spoke at last: " vide the box in half."

III. Two Monologues on the Art of Closin

The code of Homo vendens *holds that sellin beyond judgment, ruled by no moral law. To the emplary practitioner, the genius salesman, sell has the intrinsic worth of necessary things; it is as sential to the conduct of human life as speech thought. Therefore, the one who does this work tr scends ethics to become the hero of our time,* Hor vendens, *the indispensable outlaw.*

OF CARS, MAGAZINE ADVERTISING, AND BOOKS:

My favorite salespeople are like the fla boyant attorneys who, with anoth slight tick of the dice, would have be actors. They view customers as absolute sucke They're getting over, putting one over on the They don't have to sell anything or even ma any money; the motivation is just the sell, the g ting-over, in itself.

It's very much like car salesmen I've know The person they really wanted to sell was not t guy who came in deliberately looking for t brand-new Caddy, even though that was the bo commission. The most fun to sell was somebo who'd taken the wrong turn on the freeway an was going into the lot just to turn around. Ev if he bought a thousand-dollar car, it was muc more fun to sell that person. The person w lost, had no idea he was shopping for a car, turn in there by mistake, and left buying a car. Th salesman made seventy-five bucks, but he's g a story.

For a lot of salespeople, getting over is th real high. I'm not of the school that these co porate psychologists go to; they're instilli something phony. The real sales motivators t day, these psychologists who go out and speak IBM or MetLife, they have to make people b lieve. There's a great deal of guilt that the salespeople have. They do get jazzed up, b they're not deliberately going out to get high. A the end of the day the majority of these sale people come back and say, "That guy didn't r ally need another insurance policy. He's maxe out. What I sold him he's gonna be paying premium on, and his extra benefits are in finitesimal."

There's a certain type of salesman who's no troubled by that, is excited by that, that he wen back one more time and got blood out of a ston sold something the customer didn't absolute

ed. Now, you're supposed to do that. All sales-
ople are supposed to do that.

ROGER B. SMITH, FORMER CHAIRMAN
OF GENERAL MOTORS:

I remember as a child I had one of those red-vel-
t autograph books, and you took them around and
u got your favorite teacher to write something in
And your best pals and the little girlfriends all
rote something in it: roses are red, violets are
ue, like that. I remember my father wrote some-
ing in mine. He said, "Personality and brains
ve to be marketed for you to
t anywhere. Your job through
e will be to be a salesman."
nd you know, I looked at that
id I thought, "Oh, hell, it
esn't even rhyme. Oh, Dad!"
ever showed that to anybody.
think I left it in the back part of the book. You
ow, it took me a while to figure out what he was
ying.

I'm serious when I say "everybody has to be a
lesman." You don't get people to go along with
ur ideas, you can't be a leader, without being a
lesman. The chairman's got to sell the board on
is ideas; the union leader's got to sell the em-
loyees on the idea of giving up a day's wages a
ear for what they get in return for belonging to
ne union.

But let me give you an example I know. I was
alking to a young fellow the other day who's
elling California Closets. These people come in
nd they partition off this and put a few drawers
ere—so you hang all your suits up here, your
ng stuff here, you got socks in drawers. It's re-
lly a very good thing.

He was telling me he advertises, he goes in
ome-builder shows, he's in the phone book,
here's word of mouth—five or six ways he gets
eads. People call up and say, "Hey, I saw your ad
n Sunday's paper and, boy, it's just what I need.
Could you have your designer come out and de-
ign a California Closet for my home?"

Now, here are these leads, coming in twenty,
hirty a day, and this young man's got five women.
. . He's got this one over here, he calls her a lead-
ater. She goes out and she closes 20 percent of their
eads—they're all random, out of a box—and on
his end over here he's got what he calls a winner.
She gets her leads out of the same box as another
al and she closes 80 percent of the deals. And I
aid, "Look, is one tall and skinny and one a gor-
eous blonde with big hooters or something?"

He said, "No, you couldn't tell the two apart
valking through a door."

I said, "Well, what is it that makes this gal a su-
er salesman and this gal no good?"

He said, "Damned if I know. I tried to tell this
al to be more aggressive, and the customer throws
her out of the house. This gal over here, I've been with her . . . I don't know what happens—but all of a sudden we go out, we get the order, she closes that deal."

Now, there are people just like that in Cadillac. You go to any dealership, you'll find their lead salesman; he doesn't get any more leads than the worst guy, but he closes—he's got that salesman's ability to find out what is it that'll make Earl Shorris buy the car.

I'll tell you what I think, but I really don't know. I think what happens is they're able to present their case in such a way that they convince the customer that, number one, he needs the product and, number two, that this product is a good value. But more, the thing is that now is the time for him to make the decision. And I think it's that last thing, the closer, where you say to him, "Lookit, if you sign up now, I can give you a hundred-dollar discount today, but only today. Tomorrow I can't give you the discount. Earl, you look to me like the kind of guy I can really talk to, and I want to tell you, this is a deal, this is a real . . ."

The code of the salesman holds that selling is beyond judgment, ruled by no moral law. *Homo vendens* has become the indispensable outlaw

So I think they size up their people and say, "Look at that guy's red tie. I wonder what that means. It means he's aggressive, so maybe he wants to be challenged."

So I say, "Earl, you can't beat this deal. I've got a deal for you here. You can shop all over, and if you find a better way to get this, I will personally give you fifty dollars out of my own pocket."

Or they look at you and they say, "This guy, that won't hit him, he'll go out and buy somebody else's car and I'll have to pay him fifty dollars."

See, by talking to people they're able to analyze their little linchpin. And I don't think they could do this if you never opened your mouth but just listened, see? They have to converse with you well enough to size you up and know where your button is. And they've got to push that button to get you to buy.

I'm going back to the California Closet gal. I don't think this gal is able to size up the people to know what makes them tick, to understand what it is that will make them say yes. And I think the 80 percent gal, when she's talking to people, she analyzes them, she figures out, maybe right away she says, "Hey, this guy's not gonna do anything without talking to his wife. I'm wasting my time." Or, "Boy! I know what it's gonna take for this guy: He's stuck on the price. A hundred bucks'll get him. I'll give it to him and close the deal." Or,

"This guy isn't real sure that this is good quality. I'll give him a three-year written guarantee to show him this thing is really good. No extra cost!"

They know what it takes to come across and get the sale done. It's the sizing up, though, what it takes to get that button pushed. Everybody does that.

IV. Nobile and Brassiere

When art and the market share the same bed, one of them is going to get squeezed.

The antagonists were a hungry writer and a feisty publisher. The judge was the late William H. Ryan, then an editor at *Esquire* magazine, formerly the publisher of *Contact*, a West Coast version of the famous literary magazine of the 1920s, formerly this and formerly that. Ryan had bad lungs and a clear head, when he wasn't drinking. Until the bad lungs and an irrepressibly romantic view of life eventually caught up with him, he was among the most beloved of writers. A few years in New York had changed Ryan's outlook, however. A job at Random House, a stint hustling people at an employment agency, and now the "editorial gig" at *Esquire* had given him a salesman's sense of the market.

When he telephoned to invite me to a "free lunch," I said, "I don't need a free lunch. I have a job."

"No, this is on a publisher. You gotta go."

Since he had made it a point of honor, I agreed. Our host was to be Donald I. Fine, then the publisher or editor in chief or both of Arbor House, a small, more or less independent book publisher. The party was to be completed by Philip Nobile, a fellow who had written a book about *The New York Review of Books*.

When I arrived at the restaurant, Mr. Fine was standing outside. He was a small, neatly dressed man with a large bandage on his thumb. He was in extremely good humor, having just had a terrible argument with the headwaiter. With that bit of repartee completed, having nothing else to say, I asked about his thumb. "Aah!" he said, holding up the bandaged digit. "My wife. This morning I had a fight with my wife, and she bit me."

Just then Ryan arrived, and we went inside, where Mr. Fine and the headwaiter glowered at each other and Ryan treated his emphysema to a cigarette and a drink. Nobile arrived last, a young man with a cheery face and a loud tie.

Nobile quickly got to business. He had an
for a book, and he wanted to tell it to Fin
make a verbal proposal, right there at lunch.
bile began at the beginning. His presenta
was so ordered, so perfectly articulate, th
thought he must have rehearsed it. "
brassiere," he said. "There has never been a b
about the brassiere."

"You're certain of that?" Fine said, leaning
ward in his chair, suddenly focused.

"I'm sure of my research."

"Your scholarship," Fine said, editing.

Nobile spoke for fifteen, perhaps twenty m
utes, pausing only to allow Ryan's fits of cou
ing to pass. He started with the history of
breast itself, the development of the fatty ti
in the upright female creature, the only such
sue that faced the male during sex. From there
moved on to the introduction of clothing
questions of shame, modesty, the full bosom
the flat bosom, décolletage, and binding.

Fine was transfixed. Without a vulgar wor
a lascivious allusion, as delicate and deceitfu
a Victorian dressmaker, Nobile was creatin
lecherous tale. He turned to the business of
brassiere: to style, the pointed brassiere,
padded brassiere, large brassieres and small.
spoke of cantilevering and cup sizes.

Fine asked if he had talked to the manuf
turers.

Nobile mentioned that one manufacturer
going to open its archives to him.

Fine threw out a name.

Bigger, Nobile replied. He told the name. Fi
was awed. His mouth fell open. It was the bigg
manufacturer of all.

Nobile confirmed the name with a nod. He s
they would show him everything. Then he beg
his summation: physiology, a
thropology, sociology, psych
ogy, fashion, finance. He paus
Lana Turner, Jane Russell, M
ilyn Monroe. He paused aga
Anita Ekberg. Sophia Lore
With every sentence, eve
name, the value of Nobile's work increased;
changed from a kid with one whining book und
his belt into Aries, Braudel, Durkheim reborn.

Nobile had described the market for his bo
without ever mentioning it; not only wom
would care about such a book but every mothe
son. Fine was glowing, but placidly. A suckling
delight shone in his vaguely focused eyes. The
fer of a contract was in his throat, heading for t
tip of his tongue. For confirmation he turned
the man from *Esquire*. "What do you think, Bill

Ryan laughed. "I don't know," he said. "I've a
ways been a garter-belt man myself."

Fine was startled. He thought about Ryan's co

He had an idea for a book and he wanted to sell it, right there at lunch. "The brassiere," he said. "There has never been a book about the brassiere"

ent for a moment, then he said, "Yes. Me, too." Nobile was done for. The project was over, led in its first test, dead. The marketer had lost it to marketing.

V. The Senator's Daughter and the Hard-Work Candidate: A Monologue

The effectiveness of the sales tools often determines the result of an election, but not always. Some people are simply unelectable, some ideas are simply unacceptable. As with any sale, the customer's desires determine the limits of the salesman's success. The distance between selling and politics varies from campaign to campaign. When a consultant works for a Republican one year and a Democrat the next, the distance approaches the realm of objectivity; the salesman could have come from another planet. At other times, however, the salesman holds views similar to those of the candidate and has an intimate connection to the electorate; he feels himself a part of it. Then the gulf between selling and politics narrows, and a citizen/salesman, the political animal of our time, emerges.

[redacted]
POLITICAL CONSULTANT IN TENNESSEE:

The two [U.S. congressional] races where I was in charge, [Buddy] Roemer in '80 and my brother [Jim] in '82, the candidate took on a modern sense of being an actor on a stage. Not that the candidates aren't very important, but just time and the effort involved means they can't really run the campaign. Because if you're really gonna be efficient about it, you give them the schedule, you get 'em out of bed at five o'clock in the morning, you run 'em until ten o'clock at night, you get the information about what they're supposed to say and where they are.

[He stops for a moment, as if to argue with himself. The picture he has begun to draw of the candidate does not please him.] "Product" is too definite a word for the candidate. A candidate is an idea, a feeling. The candidate is comfortable with saying who he or she is, but it requires an interpreter. It required a Judge David Davis for Abraham Lincoln to create sort of the touchstones, the myth, because all politics is about myth really. But you can't ever lie with this political stuff. No myth can ever be completely made up. Abe Lincoln did grow up in an unfinished log cabin and he did split rails, but he became more than that.

It's the playmaker, the manager, the consultant, who's able to take the politician, who's a modern-day actor, and cast him in a play and help to write the script of the play. The play, though, only has about three or four lines in it. That's about all that you can get across to 500,000 people in a congressional race. It's just the three or four things about the person that makes the play work.

[He turns to his brother's congressional race against Cissy Baker, the daughter of former U.S. Senator Howard Baker, a race he managed down to the last detail.] So in Jim's case, he'd gone to Groton, he'd been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, he'd gone to Harvard Law School. He practiced law for six months in Nashville, which is not in the district. And the first line about Jim that worked, he came up with. His slogan was "The Hard-Work Candidate." And that's who he is. We went and bought a little Chevrolet automobile and we put him in the automobile and we just put him down on the road. And every time the odometer hit another milestone, we took a picture of him in some hollow out in the district, which is 500 miles long, and sent that picture out to the newspapers, and they'd all print it. As the months went by, Jim Cooper, the hard-work candidate for Congress, crossed 100,000 miles in the district, campaigning virtually nonstop.



By doing that people said, "Well, by golly, if you were in Lawrenceburg last night and Sneedville this morning and you're in Fayetteville today, you sure work hard." But the only way that could work is if you had a command post back there, in effect running the guy up around the gauntlet and sort of making everything else happen in the campaign.

The other thing that the playmaker, the consultant, the manager, has to decide about a campaign is, What is the question? Every election asks and answers a question. And everybody who's running tries to make it his or her question, an election about the question that could be answered in no other way but that it would be favorable to yourself. Any manager wants control of the idea and of the question. In our case it was: "What are you for? Are you for the Senate majority leader's daughter, or are you for the hard-work candidate?"

[The extent to which his theory of political campaigning employs the philosophy of selling comes clear in his understanding of how the candidate affects the electorate.] I don't think there

are many winning campaigns where you actually persuaded anybody of anything. What happens is you accept voters' worldview, and you define your boy or girl in a way that fits into that worldview. You can only give the voters what they want.

VI. Coffee Beans

Before television, the salesman, who mediated between desire and information, was able to affect only a part of life. He worked at what is now usually called the "point of sale." His effect was largely limited to manipulating information in the brief encounter. Television operated differently, moving back from the point of sale into the processes of imagination and desire. As television mediated between Americans and more and more of reality, it had a greater opportunity to affect the customer, to change desire, than any previous salesman, including the serpent in Eden. Television was perfectly suited to selling, because not only could it change the perception of the thing-in-itself but it could change the thing-in-itself too.

Before the Folger family sold the West Coast remnant of its coffee business to Procter & Gamble, Folger's had been a coffee-taster's company, a buyer and roaster of expensive beans. Its advertising and wholesaling had been lackadaisical. To attract customers, the company had the flavor of beans grown at high altitude in volcanic soil.

When Procter & Gamble took over the company, a group of humorless men was sent from P&G's Cincinnati headquarters to take charge of the marketing of Folger's coffee in the West. These were the Jesuits of marketing: rigorous thinkers, examiners, cold men, driven by the rules of marketing logic to question every aspect of the operation.

They put the business to the rack, the thumbscrew, and the boot of the salesman's religion. Every morning they began the inquisition early, continuing it into the afternoon and evening. The room in which they conducted the inquisition took on the odor of the fear-sweat that runs in the body's most hidden creases. No one could resist P&G's men. They had the power, they were on the side of the lord of business, they were the marketers.

Before long, they began the testing of new ways to sell the coffee. They peered, as best they could, into the minds of coffee drinkers, and then they changed the information about Folger's coffee. The beans became invested with magical powers to save marriages and foment love and affectic A woman with a Swedish name, Mrs. Olse emerged as the shaman of coffee. The televisio advertising budget increased, the sales-promoti budget increased. Sales of Folger's coffee in t western states were greater than ever before.

One change they did not advertise, howev was the effect of P&G's policies on the market f high-quality green (unroasted) coffee beans the port of San Francisco. Ernest Kahl, a coffee br ker, told me that prices fell sharply coincidenta ly with Procter & Gamble's takeover of Folger It was obvious to everyone in the business th P&G had chosen to put its money into sellir coffee instead of buying it, for the marginal retu on a dollar spent for sales and advertising w greater than the marginal return on a dollar spe for high-quality beans. In a world in which info mation could be changed to match the know desires of the buyer, the ratcheting downward the quality and character of the product was n only possible but profitable. The marketers had o ly to avoid the Promethean risk of introducir something new; they had only to limit themselv to variations on a cautious theme.

VII. Variations on Tolerance: Vietnam, Voting, and Perfume

To sell successfully, Homo vendens *cannot mal judgments. He operates on the principle that all va ue is exchange value and, as such, is set by the ma ket, no one and nothing else. Neither the utility of th thing nor its other intrinsic qualities (beauty, durabilit happiness, economy, healthfulness, and so on) ca change the judgment of the market. Condemned t endless and ever-changing tolerance,* Homo venden *lives in a world in which all products and all act have been emptied of content.*

After the end of the Vietnam War, I mad a trip overseas in the company of tw General Motors executives. One of th executives on the flight, John W. McNulty, wa then assistant to the chairman of the boar Before joining GM, McNulty had worked as fund-raiser, a publicist for Joh D. Rockefeller, and then as speechwriter for President Lyn don B. Johnson. Although w knew each other by reputa tion, McNulty and I had nev er met.

Since it was an evening flight, dinner wa served shortly after the plane finished its steej climb into the sky over the Atlantic Ocean. Mc Nulty and the other GM man ate quickly an headed up into the small lounge in the hump o the 747 to play gin rummy. While they played they drank. It was long after midnight when the

The coffee beans became invested with magical powers to save marriages and foment love. A woman with a Swedish name, Mrs. Olsen, emerged as the shaman of coffee

bandoned the gin game and came down to the ain cabin. McNulty sat down beside me. He as tired and a little drunk. We began to talk bout the car business. Suddenly, the weariness isappeared from his face; he turned to me and id, "You think selling Chevrolets is important? /hat difference does it make if we sell a Chevro- t or a Pontiac? When I worked for President ohnson, we had to sell the Vietnam War."

We talked about his work in the White House, he Johnson social programs, the Voting Rights ct. He had worked with Bill Movers and author eter Benchley. It had been a good time, except or the war. After a while I thought it best to larify our positions. I said, "While you ere working for Johnson, I was writ g articles for *Ramparts* and a lot of ther antiwar magazines and ewspapers. Jack, we kicked our ass."

He laughed, I laughed, and e had a drink. Although nei- ner of us ever changed his po- ition on the Vietnam War, /cNulty and I worked togeth- r for more than ten years. We olerated each other, as sales- hen do.

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When I worked in San rancisco, Peter Dailey— ead of the advertising gency that bore his ame—and I used to excuse ourselves from meetings in the ate afternoon to attend to other usiness. He went off to Sacramento o ride in the next morning's Reagan ranch break- ast, and I went down the street to work on *Scan- n's*, an antiwar magazine. Pete knew where I vas going, and I knew where he was going.

A few years later, after I had moved to New ork, I read in the newspapers that Pete had een named to head the November Group, hich had as its sole mission the reelection of ichard Nixon. I was disappointed. I had al- ways thought Pete went to the Reagan ranch reakfasts to look for new business. It made no ense to me then. Pete's lawyer was one of the eading antiwar attorneys in Los Angeles. I had worked in his San Francisco office. But there he vas! Peter Dailey, a man so open in business lealings that I had wondered whether he was aive, was managing the campaign to reelect he president.

Not more than a week later Pete telephoned me n New York. We chatted for a few seconds; he in- ested a flattering sentence or two, then said, "I'm orming a group to do the advertising for President Nixon's reelection campaign. I'd like you to give us the advantage of your thinking."

I was astonished. He knew me and my work. He must have known that I had recently met with the leaders of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (Viet Cong) in Paris, and yet he was inviting me to work for Richard Nixon. How was it possible? I wondered. The article I had published about my conversations with the Viet Cong contained their rebuttal to Nixon's argument that a Communist victory in Vietnam would result in a bloodbath.

I declined with laughter: "Pete, have you got the wrong guy!"

He seemed surprised. He said something about "coming around," and then he laughed, too.

Pete was a true salesman; he took me for such a salesman too. In his world there were many products; I think he could not understand why there were so few in mine. He really did go to the Reagan ranch breakfasts to find new business for his company, even if the business he found was ideology. His interest was not in the product but in the sale.



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She began every sales call the same way, leaning forward from the hips, speaking in her toodle-oo voice, with a big smile, a broad smile, a twenty-tooth and more-than-a-little-gum smile. "Hi, there. It's the perfume lady."

Customers were charmed, especially the more sophisticated customers. Her 1930s voice and delivery were completely out of keeping with her ethnic New York good looks and her street-smart makeup and clothes. The combination made them laugh. It wasn't exactly camp, people said, but it was close. It would have been camp if there hadn't been so much hunger in her eyes.

"Hi, there. It's the perfume lady," she said, showing her white teeth, her pink gums.

She licked her lips, she painted her eyebrows, she wore eyeshadow and eyeliner, lip gloss, blusher, base, pancake. When her front teeth, which were slightly too large, dried in the air of laughter and conversation, she brought her upper lip down over her teeth or wet them with her tongue.

"Hi, there. It's the perfume lady," she said, accompanying her greeting with a delicate wave of her hand, the kind of wave a princess might bestow on commoners, if the princess were four years old and blessed with chubby thighs and dimpled knees.

When she had been interviewed by the cos-

metics-company recruiter, she'd confessed that she was not interested in sales; what had appealed to her was the free sample kit and the discount on makeup and especially perfume. The recruiter told her that many of their most successful saleslades had been drawn to a career in personal selling by the same offer.

In the third through the sixth training sessions she had learned sales techniques, all of which ended with closing the sale. The training instructor praised her technique in asking for the order, but the future perfume lady never lost her conviction that it was the beginning rather than the end of the sales call that had the greatest effect. "Hi, there. It's the perfume lady," she said over and over, singing the first word a little more, lowering the pitch of her voice on the word "perfume," testing substitutes for "lady," "woman," "girl," "kid," and "person" to see if she could find any combination of words more appealing than the six words she practiced.

The seventh and final training session was a lesson in natural markets. The instructor said that the most successful people in the company sales force were those with large families and many friends, acquaintances, and co-workers. She greeted the news with a sigh. Her family was small. The objects of her life were men. She dressed for men, she laughed for men, she wore bustiers and garters and perfume for men. Her natural market was not promising. Women did not interest her. She had only a few friends.

If marketing—the domain of *Homo vendens*—has reached back into the imagination, then it has begun to determine the course of human society

Her co-workers at the office became her best customers for perfume. She looked up names in the company directory and called them on the telephone: "Hi, there. It's the perfume lady. I think we met last month in the cafeteria. Anyways, I'd like to give you a sample of a new scent that just came out. There's no obligation. Can I come by?"

The perfume lady developed a technique for visiting people at home rather than in the office. She was advised by the company bulletin to develop relationships with her customers. Repeat business, the bulletin promised, was the most profitable kind.

"Hi, there. It's the perfume lady. Remember me?" she said.

The bulletin told her to notice photographs, furniture; not to be nosy, but friendly; not intimate exactly, but cozy. Every issue of the bulletin used the word "relationship."

She was pleased when her telephone presentation brought an invitation to a director's apartment to show the line. Until then her clientele had been limited to secretaries, telephone operators, assistants of one kind or another; she needed people with more disposable income, affluent customers who could raise her revenue per call.

The director bought a "B" starter package for herself and ordered three smaller packages to be sent as gifts. It was the largest sale the perfume lady had ever made. She was careful to express her gratitude and to notice the velvet sectional and the portrait of a woman in an old-fashioned dress, which turned out to be a family heirloom. As the perfume lady was preparing to leave, the director asked whether she had a moment more to give her, time enough for a demonstration.

"Of course I do. I will. I'd be glad to."

It occurred to the perfume lady that in her excitement she had forgotten to ask for payment. She decided to put it off until after the demonstration.

A towel was necessary to cover the director's blouse during the application of the eye and face makeup. The perfume lady admired the color of the blouse and said that it looked like the best quality silk. She licked her teeth and promised to be careful, but the director said she had a better solution, for the blouse was very, very expensive silk; she would simply take it off.

The perfume lady shrugged. Perhaps it was best. She stood beside the director, who fingered the tiny glass buttons of her blouse, methodically working them loose, moving down from the neck. The director was not quite as tall as the perfume lady, and she was made of straight, clean lines; there was nothing of the southern European compliance in her figure. When she smiled, she used the corners of her mouth, for her lips were thin and quick.

After she had removed her blouse, the director stood for a moment without moving. Her blue-eyed gaze was lifted to meet the perfume lady's eyes. "Rouge my nipples," the director said. She spoke in the doubtless voice, the flat, commanding voice of the control room.

A pain, more fire than hurt, like the first sensation after the shock of a deep wound, came in to the perfume lady's body. It entered just below the ribs and spread up and out, confusing the rules of her belly so that a warning of nausea rose in her gullet.

She stayed for a long time in the director's apartment. When she left, she did not forget to ask for the check, nor did she fail to compliment her customer on the velvet of her couch or the elegance of her ancestor.

VIII. Jesus Christ, TV Star

If marketing, with its scientific determination of the sires of the buyer, has reached back into the process f the imagination, to the very soul of the maker, en marketing—the domain of Homo vendens— s begun to determine the course of human society a limiting, perhaps profoundly conservative way. ie process moves within a rigidly constructed circle. arket-driven culture leaves no place for the nooks d pinnacles of genius or morality; the audience gets iat it wants and wants what it gets. The craft of the oducers of market-driven culture is limited to stay- within the lines, like a child obeying the borders of rinted cartoon in a coloring book.

If the chairman of the board of General Motors hadn't been a religious man, it might never have happened, and the cost to a television production might not have been so dear. ne time was the 1970s. As his reign neared its id, the chairman must have realized something out rich men and the eye of a needle, for he greed to pay, out of the pockets of the stockolders, the entire production and broadcast osts for a television production of *Jesus of azareth*.

The miniseries was to grease the needle's eye r another businessman as well. Lord Lew Grade, ie British music-hall performer turned film and levision producer, had another conversion in s background: he was an English Jew turned Roan Catholic. Lord Low Grade, as he was known some of his admirers, displayed the convert's ission for his new religion. He hired the prolific ovelist and critic Anthony Burgess to write the ript for *Jesus of Nazareth*, based on an original ory by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, then id the script translated into Italian to be vetd by the Vatican. Various ecclesiastical emenations were made, after which the script was anslated back into English and given to the eratic director Franco Zeffirelli to bring to the all screen.

When Protestant fundamentalists in the Unit- l States got wind of the Vatican's veto power er the script, they began a national campaign gainst the miniseries. Thousands of letters were nt to General Motors promising never again buy its products if the corporation went ahead ith the "papist" project. It fell to the director of ublic relations, Waldo E. McNaught, to deal ith the Protestant protest. After one particularly fficult day, he telephoned me to complain. "The ings I do for this goddamned corporation," he egan. "Today I was down on my knees praying."

Ever the vendor, taking the role of straight an, I asked, "What's wrong with that?"

And he said, in a voice made tremulous by trage, "With a Protestant!"

Propelled by fears for the future of American industry, McNaught as well as the chairman's assistant, John McNulty, and I went to [illegible] to have a look at the film, which was by then in the form of a rough cut, still lacking some opticals, music, and so on, but with all the voice tracks laid in.

We checked in at our hotel, then went to the offices of Lord Lew Grade, where we met with him, two people—a man and a woman—from NBC, which was to broadcast the miniseries, Zeffirelli, and several of Grade's entourage. Grade's office was decorated with dollars; that is, framed U.S. one-dollar bills, each of them autographed by a famous actor (Grade pointed out Richard Burton's bill), were hung on the walls. The woman from NBC greeted me as if we were friends. She said loudly, so that Grade and the man from NBC would hear, that she had read the series of critical essays I had been publishing in *Harper's*. Grade, an effusive man who looked like an egg with thick lips, sucked on a Churchillian cigar, silent in his displeasure. From that moment on he avoided speaking to me or even looking in my direction. The worst had happened! A novelist, a writer of literary criticism no less, had entered the camp of a producer who decorated his walls with money.

The woman from NBC looked at me and winked.

For the next two days we were to watch the rough cut of the miniseries in Grade's screening room, in the company of the egg-shaped lord, the operatic director, many minions, and the man chosen to write the musical score, Maurice Jarré. While the film rolled, I took out a notebook and now and then wrote in it. After the first morning's screening, I saw that every time I wrote in the notebook, the egg-shaped lord winced, as if someone had driven a bamboo sliver under his pink, manicured fingernail. I wrote a lot.

From time to time Grade and Zeffirelli spoke to the tiny audience in the screening room. Grade always spoke from his seat in the back. Zeffirelli, dressed in suedes that draped like silk, carrying a leather purse, stood at the front. During each presentation Grade and Zeffirelli had a brief salesman's exchange. One was so extraordinary that I put it in my notes:

> [illegible] here, where the infant Jesus is born to Mary, right here, is where we [illegible]. Through my connection with [illegible] I have very confidence that I will be able to secure the services of the Sistine Chapel Boys Choir.

> [illegible] Sistine Chapel Choir [illegible] Chapel Choir [illegible] in my film [illegible]

Choir isn't up to your standards, then you get a choir that is. That's what I told 'im. And I won't bill General Motors another penny. It's my gift.

ZEFFIRELLI: You see! He gives me everything. It's a miracle!

The next day at lunch I was split off from McNaught and McNulty. Our host was Jarré, the composer. A long table in a nearby restaurant had been arranged so that he was seated next to my wife, who had come to London with me. Jarré, recent winner of an Academy Award for the score of *Dr. Zhivago*, looked like a movie star. Handsome, a White Russian in his forties, speaking English with a strong French accent, the composer was a ladykiller. He was also a salesman, for the task of the composer in the movies is to sell the picture to the audience. This time, however, the salesman had been sent to sell the picture to my wife, who had joined us for lunch. Between the appetizer and the soup, I looked at the head of the table, where Monsieur Jarré, holding the hand of the woman seated on his right, my wife, gazed into her eyes and said, "I see by zee green color of zee eyes zat you are Spanish." To which my wife, who had spent many years in the movie business, replied, "They're hazel."

Because money, like tomorrow, does not exist, the sellers of the abstractions of finance are the purest salesmen, the least impeded by reality

When the last hour of the miniseries had at last been viewed, the egg-shaped lord spoke again to his market of three, after which the market—McNulty, McNaught, and Shorris—were driven to their hotel, where they planned to gather to discuss the miniseries.

It was July, and it was hot in London, hotter than it had been in years. Our hotel, the Dorchester, was not only without air-conditioning; its new owners, a group from the Arabian peninsula, apparently did not think it necessary to turn off the steam that coursed through the towel racks in the bathrooms. By the time I got to the suite McNaught and McNulty shared, I found them stripped to the waist and drinking bottles of cold beer. It was not a pretty sight.

Within moments, the telephone rang. McNaught picked it up in his bedroom. "Shorris," he shouted, "it's for you. It's that dame from NBC."

I answered the phone in the other room. The woman from NBC asked, "How did you like the film?"

"Wellll," I said, dragging out the word, not wanting to offer a comment until McNaught,

"I just got here. We were going to talk."

"It's a piece of shit," the woman from NB said.

"You think so?"

"Sure, it's a piece of shit, but it'll get great r views. No critic is going to attack *Jesus Nazareth*."

"You know more about that than I do."

"Well, I just wanted you to know. We're goi back to New York tonight. I'll see you there."

"Sure."

McNaught had been listening on the oth phone. He came into the parlor wearing his A ice in Wonderland smile. "It's so good to he from our benefactors at NBC. And what is yo opinion, Mr. Shorris?"

I had made notes about more than a few scene the most memorable of them had to do with th scourging of Jesus. Rod Steiger in the role of Po tius Pilate looks at the actor (since forgotte who plays Jesus and says of th bedraggled, blue-eyed, blon young Englishman, "Ecce h mo!" then turns to the came and explains, "Behold th man." The woman from NB had been correct about th quality of the film. But that had been clear fro the beginning. What I had noted during th screening was a series of anti-Semitic statement all of them gratuitous.

I made my case to the men from General M tors, saying, as I recall, in a good-humored wa that if the film were to be presented witho deleting or modifying those scenes, I would ne er again work for General Motors, nor would even speak to anyone, meaning them, wh worked for the corporation. McNaught raised h eyebrows and pursed his lips, mocking my earnes ness. McNulty merely nodded. He is a tall ma fair, and with a rather large nose for a leprechau "D'ja see anything else wrong?" he asked, Sai Thomas Aquinas speaking in the accents of Ir land and the farthest reaches of the borough Brooklyn.

"No. I don't think so."

"D'ja see anything wrong with the ending?"

"No. Was there something wrong?"

"Ye-ah," he said in several syllables. "The didn't resurrect 'im."

"Oh, my God!"

He paused for a moment, and then said for th only time in the twenty years that I've know him, "Ahem."

The error, which had gone unnoticed by An thony Burgess, Franco Zeffirelli, the Vatican NBC, and even the egg-shaped lord himself, ha been spotted by Jack McNulty. At his insistence the producers reassembled the necessary member of the cast on location in North Africa and filme

aman from NBC and other critics, the funda-
entalists finally won out. A few days before
e program was to be broadcast, Roger B. Smith,
ir apparent to the chairman's job at General
mpany spent on NBC. Then he called the
twork. The ironclad contract evaporated, NBC
d the show to Procter & Gamble at distress-
e prices, and *Jesus of Nazareth* went on the air
ppier ending.

The egg-shaped lord and the operatic direc-
d demonstrated once again that, unlike other
esmen, those who run the film and television
dustries are not only willing but able to move
aven and earth to satisfy the desires of their cus-
ners.

IX. A New Kind of Love

Wealth, once the creation of capitalists through
rld through the work of salesmen, who bid up the
lue of abstractions as if they were things of intrin-
worth. Because money does not exist, any more
n does tomorrow or the day before time began, the
lers of the abstractions of finance are the purest sales-
n, the least impeded by reality.

use-and-chemical stench of Secaucus have
en left far behind, and the landscape outside the
r window has turned bucolic. The farms have
e look of wealth about them, and the cross-
ow. Far back from the state roads, in the seclu-
n of hills or groves of trees, large corporations
ve set their headquarters or research opera-
ns or training centers. In one of these, which
errill Lynch calls its corporate campus, the
rest of all salesmen—stockbrokers—learn a
w way to sell.

The new method, which was probably learned
m observing lawyers, product managers, and the
arking habits of dogs, was forced upon the "full
rvice" brokerage firms, like Merrill, by the es-
blishment of discount brokerages that appeal to
unger customers. Although Merrill Lynch ex-
utives deny that the discount brokers had any
ect on their business strategy, a book entitled
are Ownership, published by the New York

the character of selling

portfolios of their clients. Or it might pay bonu
es to brokers according to how much their clien
professed to love or trust or simply like doi
business with them. In that case, relationsh
selling would be about relationships first an
selling second.

A look at the training tapes sent around Mer
rill Lynch's offices presents a very different vie
from that of Dolores Gibson, the pretty
fully made-up former schoolteacher who ru
the training program. Brokers are advised to s
goals for production, to use their time wisel

The client-interviewing process Merr
Lynch calls "profiling" turns o
to be a way to "gather assets
Weinstein and a young Merr
Lynch broker, Saly Glassma
star in the tapes. Weinstein lo
es some of the appealing tim
bre of her voice and th
gentleness of her selling ma
ner on the tapes. Glassma
seems more like a mone
machine than a person. Sh
speaks of quantitative goal
and the basics of the brokerag
business: time management, pr
do with the welfare of the oth
person, it did not appear in th
apes. The relationship was mer
ly a means to selling a produc
"dropping the ticket." Glassm
reveals the business goal of rel
tionship selling as she explains
to her audience: "I could be th
best stock-picker in the world
but if I don't establish a relation
ship, the client won't stick with m
... By the time you make a recommen
dation on a product, 90 percent of the selling ha
been done, and it's just a question of closing on th

Can it be that the advent of the discount bro
ker had no effect on Merrill Lynch's plan? Ca
it be that Weinstein makes an error in argumen
when she talks about the cost of an investmen
advisory service for Schwab customers, saying
simply replaces the service Merrill Lynch cu
tomers get from their financial consultants? Ac
cording to Gibson, the change in the business i
the 1980s was not the beginning of the discour
brokerage houses. "A bigger variable," she sai
"was the sophistication of the consumer. Ther
was an incredible proliferation of informatio
on financial matters." She went on to talk abou
flipping through the television channels an
finding people talking about real-estate invest
ment trusts (REITs) and sophisticated swaps.



persona at all, merely

about the client. Th

"If you're going to help somebod
you need the information. The steps
are to gather the information and

tions. Good relationships are im-

Before she gives custo mers

discount broker) "has relationships with
financial planners who do what Merrill Lynch is

Weinstein, leaning forward slightly, sipping

wever, we are in business

When I suggested to her that knowledgeable
tomers might be more comfortable using the
imal service of the discounters, she smiled
I kept on talking, the pretty teacher in the
fect suit, with the delicate scarf at her throat,
turing, following the lesson plan. She spoke of
eting and getting a new client, the essence of
ionship selling. "A good match of person, it
style, philosophy. I would have to tell you
nething you would identify with. I think that
sale is a process and that there are a series of
es that have to take place along the process.
e sale doesn't happen when you drop the tick-
How do you know when it happens? When you
in love!"

X. The Wrenches of China

No man, no matter how rich or how white, can
ep in more than one bed or sit on more than one
et. By redistributing wealth in favor of one class,
nerica has made the job of the salesman virtually
ossible: large numbers of people can't afford a
w bed or a new toilet, while others who could eas-
buy a hundred beds or a thousand toilets have
ne to the realization that they have more beds and
ets than they want, let alone need. Toilet makers
l bed manufacturers, who have spent decades be-
ing they could continually increase production
d depend on salesmen to find a way to market their
ds, have found out that the salesmen have already
ne their job too well. The market is oversold.

Shortly after Richard Nixon surprised the world by opening relations with China, a group of advertising executives went Beijing to investigate the business possibili-s. They knew very little about the country, ex-pt that it was the home of re than a billion potential stomers. The Chinese, for eir part, knew very little out Americans, except that ey were rich and that their hes were kept in hard cur-ncy. It was a meeting of dreamers: Madison enue and Mao. Although they did not know the Americans were about to travel into their n past, for China's economy was then much e America's after World War II; the industri-nfrastructure was in place, the market seemed tually infinite, the people were hungry for ything the economy could produce.

The journey began with painful inoculations, lowed a few weeks later by a very long flight m New York. The food in Beijing, sumptuous Maoist standards, was sickening to men who d lived for many years in the magical nexus of siness, taxes, and pleasure, where everything was ntastically expensive and absolutely free. And there was nothing in *The Little Red Book* of Chairman Mao about bimbos.

The Maoists took the offensive, making proposals to sell to the American market. In one meeting, reported by N. W. Ayer's emissary to the depths of socialist planning, the Chinese said they were prepared to deliver 5 million wrenches to be sold in the United States. They explained that China had great reserves of coal and iron, many forges, and a vast supply of labor—everything needed to make the wrenches.

When they displayed some samples, it was immediately apparent that the wrenches were crudely made, more or less to the requirements of the metric system, and of cast iron rather than steel. Although none of the Americans was familiar with the hardware business, they knew from having toyed with a faucet in Greenwich or visited a Sears in Westchester that the wrenches were improperly sized for the American market of the time and that, worse, they were of such poor quality that few Americans would buy them—at any price.

Five million, the Chinese repeated proudly, 5 million for America.

Advertising executives have many flaws, but tactlessness is not one of them. In response to the Chinese proposition, the Americans did not criticize the wrenches; they delivered a brief lecture on marketing. Before you make something, they explained, you must be certain that someone will buy it.

The Chinese were puzzled. They had developed the capacity to produce 5 million wrenches. It was a triumph of socialism. What was wrong with the Americans? Perhaps they were not sincere. It was the end of the conversation. The Americans packed their Lomotil and went home.

Later, long after the disgrace of the president who had opened relations with China, a trade fair was arranged. The Chinese were to bring examples of their goods to the United States to see if they could sell everything from heavy machinery to tiny umbrellas made of rice paper and matchsticks. To advertise the trade fair, a freestanding insert approximately the size of a Sunday newspaper [illegible] N. W. Ayer and produced and distributed by the *New York Times*.

No man, no matter how rich or how white, can sleep in more than one bed at a time. The salesmen have done their job too well. The market is oversold

In the course of this profitless activity, an English-speaking man and woman from the Chinese trade mission were escorted to my office one afternoon. By that time industrialists from Beijing no longer wore gray Mao jackets and little caps

Chinese playing cards: a colorless queen and her bespectacled knave.

We greeted one another formally; then I invited

windows of my fortieth floor office.

There was a moment when the trade representatives of the People's Republic and I almost

from Chairman Mao, telling them I was glad to see our two countries engaged in acts of trade rather than imperialism. They listened, but not with interest; my American liberal politics must have seemed puny to them. Then the woman, who appeared to be in charge of the mission, leaned forward, her face suddenly animated, transformed into an operatic mask of curiosity. She said, "Tell us about your work, please. What is demand, and

XI. A Return to Wonder

It is evening, the order book has been put away, *Homo vendens*, perhaps a commuter riding home on a train or a traveler settling down in a motel at the edge of an unfamiliar town, closes his eyes for a moment, and in the mirror glimpses his human life. Who is he? How does he value himself? What is it about him that offends?

He may sniff at his own body, contemplate

a woman, she may study the clarity of her eyes or the shape of her waist. They are interchangeable, the man and the woman; they sell, and it is selling that defines them.

They consider themselves useful. In the courtship of mind and matter, they are the dancing masters. It has always been so, since Eden, since Prometheus, coyote, and crow. The man or the woman sees a blemish, an unexpected hair, sweat, colonies of bacteria growing in a bodily crease, could that be the offense?

Nothing is wrong. They have exceeded their quotas, loved their children, buried their parents. What about them offends? It must be an error of judgment, they say to themselves, but in the revelations that come in the blink of an eye, they read the signs of unhappiness. Something is wrong.

Homo vendens bears the burden of the sadness

Is there an alternative to the domination of *Ho mo vendens*? If so, such an alternative is no longe an easy choice, for the economy of the world built upon the belief that the tutelage of the ma ket has been inculcated in virtually everyone i the United States and is working its way into th would be catastrophic, disrupting markets, throw ing millions of people out of work. The custome the thing the salesman puts to use, cannot b made suddenly to disappear, replaced overnigh by enlightenment's daring thinker. The cost o such a revolution would be too high. The tutelag of the market must continue. But for how long an to what extent?

This question of the quality of our existence wa raised in earnest by Socrates, who asked wha kind of life was worth living. He spoke in de fense of reason. He abjured the unexamined life choosing instead to die.

The choice in our time is not to die but t think, for in thinking freedom begins, and free dom is the antidote to *Homo vendens*; it is th parent of autonomy. But how can thinking be gin? What are the ingredients of the antidote How can we avoid moments such as the one i the courtroom that day when man was but means?

A plan for thinking that is as simple as the in structions for assembling a table or a toy canno be written. In an earlier time, wonder was con sidered a beginning; merely to separate onese from nature was then sufficient to trigger though But now we accuse one another of being to alienated from nature to understand its impo tance; we can no longer be awakened by the su prise of finding ourselves in the world rather tha merely a part of it. Thinking must begin from different occasion.

The source of wonder now can only be astor ishment at our own existence. This flash of awar ness has been described by many, but rarely in comprehensible way. It is the sudden recogn tion of one's own being, according to some; th sensation of one's physical presence in space, a cording to others. Or it may be the experience being within Being.

But I think it is not so arcane or complicate an idea. Wonder appears at the instant when person sheds the modesty imposed upon him o her by others and recognizes the truth that e erything must begin from man, not all men b any man, any woman. At that moment he bestow upon himself the dignity of creators. He becom the mother and the father of the world, yet gui ed by a sense of limits, for he is uplifted by the jo of creation and burdened by the responsibility freedom, a creature who has chosen—out of reco nition of the worth of his own being and begi

FOOL FOR SCANDAL

How the *Times* got Whitewater wrong

By Gene Lyons

T

and Multimedia Extravaganza, now on the verge of entering its second smash year, has always played very differently here in Little Rock than in, say, Washington, New York, or Los Angeles. To read the great metropolitan newspapers, observe the grave demeanor of network TV anchors, and heed the rhetoric of the politicians and their own, one would gather that the republic teeters on the brink of a constitutional crisis. The dread "gate" suffix of Nixonian legend has been applied. Melodramatic charges of bribery, corruption, cover-up, even of suicide and murder. ington). There has even been loose talk of presidential impeachment.

estate deal up in Marion County and a savings

$65 million—the 190th most costly S&L failure

nted for about 7 percent of the public $1

here in little old Arkansas. For the longest time,

pense. But that's her business. What little I

written over the years has been mostly critical. In

Little Rock TV station in back in 1988 re liem

that the

an Transylvania

referen

eign t

Graves

Hamilton Jordan's Crisis: The War Over the Presidency, Watergate and Trials of Jimmy Carter

...dum during the term of Republican

... did we get here? Well, at the expense

scar[illegible]ed, but not particularly fair or balanced

art of tactical omission to insinuate all manner of sin and skulduggery. Accompanied by a series of indignant editorials, Gerth's work helped create a full-scale media clamor last December for a special prosecutor. Testimony in recent Senate hearings showed that the Resolution Trust Corporation's Whitewater investigation began in direct response to the *Times* coverage; the hearings *themselves* resulted in large part from the Clinton Administration's panicky reaction to reporters' queries about the RTC probe. Gerth's among them. Absent the near-talismanic role of the *New York Times* in American journalism, the whole complex of allegations and suspicions subsumed under the word "Whitewater" might never have made it to the front page, much less come to dominate the national political dialogue for months at a time. It is all the more disturbing, then, that most of the insinuations in Gerth's reporting are either highly implausible [illegible]

THE RECEIVED VERSION OF THE WHITEWATER SCANDAL [illegible] BEARS ALMOST NO RELATION TO REALITY

Let us return briefly to those thrilling days of yesteryear—specifically the 1992 primary season. On March 8, 1992, Jeff Gerth's initial story about Whitewater appeared on the *Times* front page under the headline CLINTONS JOINED S.&L. OPERATOR IN AN OZARK REAL-ESTATE VENTURE:

[illegible] position," records of the 1984 examination show.

[illegible]

amination of Madison, but added that in her vi[illegible] the findings were not "definitive proof of ins[illegible] vency."

In 1985, Mrs. Clinton and her Little Rock l[illegible] firm, the Rose firm, twice applied to the [Arkan[illegible] Securities Commission on behalf of Madison, a[illegible] ing that the savings and loan collect[illegible] novel plans to raise money.

Mrs. Schaffer wrote to Mrs. Clinton and [illegible] other lawyer at the firm approving the ideas [illegible] never gave anybody special treatment," she sai[illegible]

Madison was not able to raise additional capi[illegible] And by 1[illegible] federal regulators [illegible] son's deposits, took control of the institution a[illegible] ousted Mr. McDougal. Mrs. Schaffer supported [illegible]

Gerth's original story was recently praised [illegible] the *American Journalism Review* as containing [illegible] to 90 percent of what the press knows ab[illegible] Whitewater today. Rival reporters complain[illegible] though, that the 1992 article lacked a "nut pa[illegible] graph" summing up what the Clintons had d[illegible] wrong and why it was important.

The insinuations became clearer in sub[illegible] quent Gerth stories in the fall of 1993.* F[illegible] lowing the *Washington Post*'s October 31, 19[illegible] revelation that the RTC had made a referra[illegible] the Justice Department naming the Clinton [illegible] (perhaps unwitting) beneficiaries of possi[illegible] criminal actions, Gerth and Stephen Eng[illegible] berg, another *Times* reporter, wrote lengthy [illegible] ticles that appeared on November 2 [illegible] December 15. The first dealt mainly with [illegible] still-unsubstantiated claims of former Mun[illegible] ipal Judge David Hale that Bill Clinton ur[illegible] him to commit federal bank fraud by lend[illegible] $300,000 to Jim McDougal's wife, Sus[illegible] (Gerth and Engelberg neglected to point [illegible] that David Hale—no Clinton intimate b[illegible] courthouse pol first appointed by Republi[illegible] Governor Frank White—had set up thirt[illegible] dummy companies with the same mailing [illegible] dress as his own, evidently without press[illegible] from the Clintons.) Elsewhere, the Novem[illegible] 2 piece was pretty much a rehash of the or[illegible] nal 1992 article, with a few characteristic [illegible] misleading tidbits added for emphasis. "By 19[illegible] Mr. McDougal's bank was in trouble w[illegible] Arkansas regulators," the *Times* informed re[illegible] ers. "The state's banking commissioner, Ma[illegible] S. Jackson, ordered the bank to stop making [illegible]

* By this time, recall, the stakes were incontest[illegible] higher—Bill Clinton was President of the Un[illegible] States; politically damaging memos by one Jean L[illegible] an employee in the ostensibly neutral RTC, had [illegible] leaked to Republican Congressman Jim Leach [illegible] others; and right-wing outfits like Floyd Brown's [illegible] tizens United had begun to churn out what T[illegible] Lieberman in the *Columbia Journalism Review* call[illegible] steady stream of tips, tidbits, documents, factoids [illegible] picions and story ideas for the nation's press."

dent loans. Mr. Jackson, a Clinton ap-
ntee, said in an interview last year that he
Mr. Clinton at the time of Mr. McDougal's
stionable practices." Now, what Jackson
the *Los Angeles Times* (which also turned
tale inside out but did give fair context) was
the governor had urged him to ignore pol-
s and be the "best banking commissioner
can [be]." Jackson had acted on this sug-
ion, with the result that the
ntons' own note was called
he real bombshell was Gerth
Engelberg's December 15,
3, story, which all but accused
n Clintons, Jim McDougal, and
erly Bassett Schaffer of crimi-
conspiracy to keep Madison
aranty afloat regardless of the
. But the implication in that
ount that has shown the most
ing power involves a supposed
d pro quo involving Hillary
lham Clinton. It centers on an
ril 1985 political fund-raiser
McDougal held and the sus-
on that he may have illegally
oned Madison Guaranty funds
Bill Clinton's campaign cof-
. "Just a few weeks after Mr.
Dougal raised the money for
n," the *Times* noted darkly,
adison Guaranty won approval
m Mrs. Schaffer, Mr. Clinton's
financial regulator, for a nov-
lan to sell stock."
The search for new capital,"
rth and Engelberg continued,
ook Madison to the offices of Mrs
chaffer, who had the ultimate au-
hority to approve any such stock
ale. One of the lawyers employed by
Madison to argue its case before the
tate regulators was Mrs. Clinton.

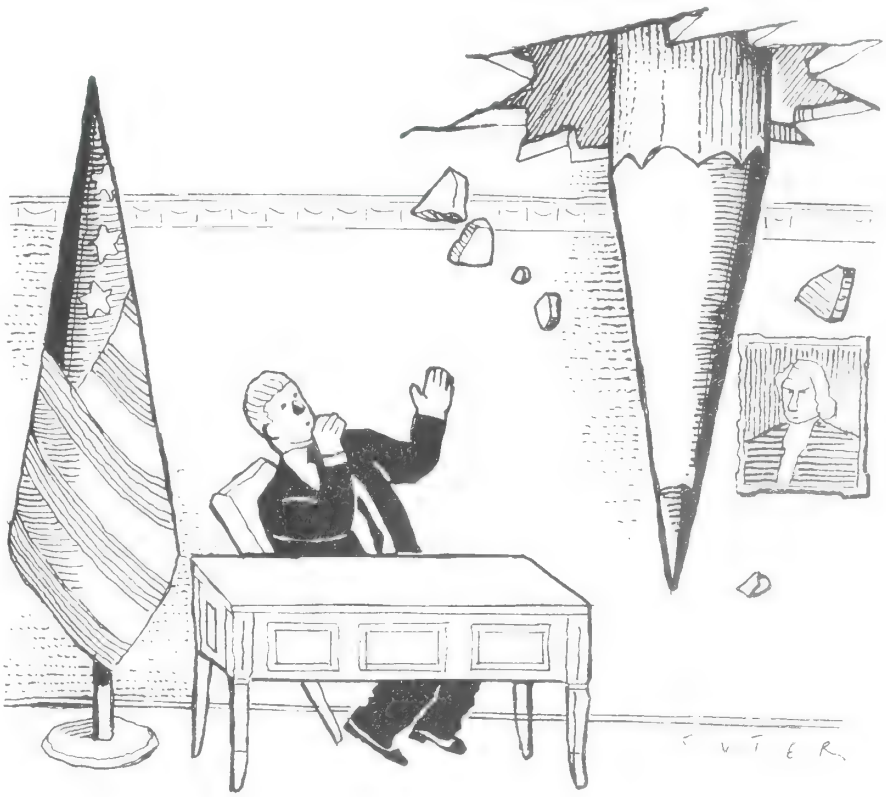
Within weeks, Mrs. Schaffer wrote a letter to
Mrs. Clinton giving preliminary approval to Madi-
on's stock plan.

The sale never went forward. But this fall the
RTC asked the Justice Department to examine a
umber of Madison's transactions, and federal of-
icials say the state's approval of the stock plan was
mong the matters raised by investigators.

The *Times* also quoted McDougal to the effect
t Bassett Schaffer was his handpicked choice
Arkansas securities commissioner.

The theory implicit in Gerth's *Times* stories
be summarized as follows: when his busi-
s partner and benefactor McDougal got in
ible, Bill Clinton dumped the sitting Arkansas
urities commissioner and appointed a hack,
erly Bassett Schaffer. He and Hillary then
pressured Bassett Schaffer to grant McDougal special favors—until the vigilant feds cracked down on Madison Guaranty, thwarting the Clintons' plan. This is the Received Version of the Whitewater scandal as it first took shape in the pages of the *New York Times*—what all the fuss is ultimately about. And it bears almost no relation to reality.

The distortions begin with the headline of the



original Gerth story in the *Times*

TURE. This headline was misleading because when Bill and Hillary Clinton entered into the misbegotten partnership to subdivide [illegible] forested acres along the White River as resort property in 1978, Jim McDougal wasn't involved in the banking and S&L businesses at all. He was [illegible] Senators J. William Fulbright and John L. McClellan. In the meantime, McDougal had done well in the inflation-[illegible] of the Seventies. But [illegible] later—by which time the Whitewater investment was already moribund—that he bought a controlling interest in Madison Guaranty.

Details, details. Gerth wrote that McDougal

state chartered associations in Arkansas." Wrong

detail might be forgiven if Gerth had in fact uncovered a conspiracy between the Clintons and the Arkansas securities commissioner to treat Jim McDougal leniently. The appearance of con-

reporting.

Consider, for example, Gerth's treatment of the appointment of Beverly Bassett Schaffer as Arkansas securities commissioner in his March 8, 1992, article: "After Federal regulators found that Mr. McDougal's savings institution, Madison Guaranty, was insolvent, meaning it faced possible closure by the state, Mr. Clinton appointed a new state securities commissioner. . . ." The clear implication is that *in response* to a Federal Home Loan Bank Board report dated January 20, 1984, suggesting that Madison might be insolvent, Clinton in January 1985 installed Bassett Schaffer as Arkansas securities commissioner for the purpose of protecting McDougal.

So how come he waited an entire year? In reality, the timing of Bassett Schaffer's appointment had nothing to do with the FHLBB report, which there's no reason to think Clinton knew about. (The Clintons had no financial stake in Madison Guaranty, although that, too, has been

that Bill Clinton had to find a new commissioner in January 1985 because the incumbent, Lee Thalheimer, had resigned to reenter private practice. Appointed by Republican Governor Frank White and kept on by Clinton, Thalheimer says he told Gerth this in an interview, and describes the *Times* allegation as unmitigated horseshit."

I EMBARRASSMENT OF FUNNY MONEY IN THE CLINTONS' DIRECTION, THE DEPARTMENT SURE FOUND AN ODD WAY TO REWARD HIM

this day she has never met McDougal, never heard Bill Clinton mention his name, and does not

her appointment and told Gerth so. She had actively sought the job from the moment she learned that Thalheimer

ton's 1974 congressional campaign and had worked for him full time on the Arkansas attorney general's staff while in law school. And her brother, Woody Bassett, also a Fayetteville attorney, was a personal friend and supporter of

The claim that Jim McDougal was behind Bassett Schaffer's appointment rests entirely on the word of McDougal himself, a victim of manic-depressive illness whose lawyer filed an insanity plea in a 1990 bank-fraud trial in U.S. District Court, in which McDougal was ultimately found not guilty. In his original 1992 article, Gerth had acknowledged McDougal's history of emotional illness but described him as "stable, careful and calm." By 1993 mention of those difficulties had all but vanished from the pages of the *New York Times*—despite the fact that the supposed recipient of Bill Clinton's largess was living in Arkadelphia in a trailer on SSI disability payments. Also unmentioned, for what it's worth, was that McDougal had long since recanted his accusations against Clinton and taken to blaming the whole mess on Republican partisans in the RTC.

But did Bassett Schaffer help McDougal anyway? Did the Arkansas Securities Department, as Gerth asserts, have proof of Madison Guaranty's insolvency in early 1985? Did Bassett Schaffer have the legal authority to shut it down?

Consider the allegation that Madison was insolvent and Bassett Schaffer failed to respond. True, the 1984 FHLBB report did argue that Madison Guaranty had overestimated its profits from contract land sales—not including Whitewater—by $564,705. "Correcting entries will adversely effect [*sic*] net worth and result in an insolvent position." But is this proof of legal insolvency? Hardly. In the first place (although Gerth neglected to point this out), the title page of the document from which the *Times* reporter took the one brief passage he cited stipulated that it had "been prepared for supervisory purposes only and should not be considered an audit report." More significantly, federal auditors later accepted Madison's position on contract land sales, and the putative adjustments were never made. Indeed, on June 26, 1984, six months after the report Gerth cited, and six months *before* Bassett Schaffer took office, Madison Guaranty's board of directors met in Dallas with state and federal regulators. They agreed to enter a formal "Supervisory Agreement" with the FHLBB that spelled out detailed legal and accounting procedures designed to help the S&L improve its financial position. In a letter dated September 11, 1984, the FHLBB gave Madison formal approval of a debt-restructuring plan that "negat[ed] the need for adjustment of $564,705 in improperly recognized profits" and dropped all references to insolvency. Arkansas officials also called Gerth's attention to an independent 1985 audit that also refuted Madison's insolvency. In his story the reporter neglected to mention either document.

McDougal showed any funny money in the
nions' direction—either through Whitewa
or an April 1985 campaign fund-raiser—the
ansas Securities Department sure found a
way to reward him. No sooner did Bassett
after receive the FHLBB's 1986 report on
adison than she recommended stringent ac-
n. On July 11, 1986, she and a member of
staff flew to Dallas to meet with FHLBB
Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Cor-
ation regulators for a showdown with Madi-
n's board. McDougal himself was not invited.
Dougal was stripped of authority, and feder-
officials agreed to supervise the failed thrift un-
the FSLIC found money to pay depositors.
hen, a year later, Bassett Schaffer received
audit for 1986 (and a revised audit for 1985)
icially reflecting that Madison Guaranty was
olvent, she wrote the FHLBB and FSLIC a
ter, dated December 10, 1987, strenuously
ging them to shut down Madison and two
ner Arkansas S&Ls. Fifteen months later,
leral regulators (whose tardiness cannot be blamed on pressure from a state governor) finally locked Madison's doors.

There is not the slightest evidence, then, at Bassett Schaffer inappropriately delayed king action against Madison. Nor, it seems, d she bend the law when asked by Hillary Clinn to approve a stock sale by the ailing thrift. Remember the dark hint of misdeeds in Gerth d Engelberg's December 15, 1993, story: "Just ew weeks after Mr. McDougal raised the mon- for [Governor Clinton], Madison Guaranty on approval from Mrs. Schaffer, Mr. Clinton's w financial regulator, for a novel plan to sell ock." Now, what made Madison Guaranty's an "novel" is hard to say. The vast majority of ate-regulated S&Ls in 1985 issued stock. Even , the adjective, with its implication of wrong- ing, has recurred mantra-like in virtually ev- y Whitewater roundup article since.

For Hillary Rodham Clinton to have ventured ywhere near Madison in any capacity was a mn fool thing to do. But the fact is that her en- e involvement in the "novel" stock issue con- ted of the mention of her name in a letter itten by a junior member of the Rose Law rm expressing the opinion that it would be rmissible under state law for Madison Guaranty make a preferred stock offering. After study- g the applicable statutes and consulting with r staff, Bassett Schaffer agreed. "Arkansas law," e wrote in a two-paragraph letter dated May 14, 985—the now-famous "Dear Hillary" missive—xpressly gives state chartered associations all the wers given regular business corporations . . . in- uding the power to authorize and issue pre- rred capital stock." Bassett Schaffer had issued the narrowest sort of regulatory opinion. Had she ruled otherwise, Madison Guaranty would have had no difficulty finding a judge to reverse her. Anyway, no application was ever filed.

The Arkansas Securities Department's power to close ailing S&Ls was mostly theoretical. Unlike the feds, Bassett Schaffer's office had no plenary authority to shut S&Ls down and seize their assets. Nor did Arkansas law make any provision for the state to pay off depositors of bankrupt S&Ls. That duty belonged to the FSLIC. "We acted in unison at all times," says Walter Faulk, then director of supervision for the FHLBB in Dallas. "I never saw [Bassett Schaffer] take any action that was out of the ordinary. Nor, to be perfectly honest, could she have gotten away with anything if she did. To my knowledge, there is nothing that she or the governor of Arkansas did or could have done that would have delayed the action on this institution."

When I asked him recently about the discrepancies and omissions in his reporting, Jeff Gerth stood his ground, alternately argumentative and defensive, and did not wish to be quoted. He argues, for example, that he never literally wrote that Jim McDougal had *in fact* gotten Bassett Schaffer the job, merely that he'd claimed to. Her denial struck him as beside the point. In other instances, he pleaded limitations of time and space.

The perception that Gerth most resents is the one most talked about in Arkansas: his reliance upon the hidden hand of Sheffield Nelson—Clinton's 1990 Republican gubernatorial opponent and a legendary political infighter. The *Times* reporter insists that Nelson did no more than give him Jim McDougal's phone number and later introduce him to former Judge David Hale, whose defense attorney is Nelson's associate. Nelson, the Republican nominee for governor again in 1994, tends to be coy about his role. But he has given other reporters a thirty-eight-page transcript of an early 1992 conversation between himself and McDougal, then embittered by what he saw as Clinton's abandonment.

Indeed, Jeff Gerth, Sheffield Nelson, and the *New York Times* go way back. As long ago as 1978, Gerth wrote a well-tuned expose of Nelson's mortal foes Witt and Jack Stephens—the billionaire natural-gas moguls and investment bankers who ran Arkansas like a company store during the Orval Faubus era (1955–67). The Stephens brothers owned a small gas-distribution company in Fort Smith that was paying them at a better rate than other gas-royalty owners. But what made Gerth's piece significant was its timing: it appeared shortly before a Democratic primary in which the Stephenses' nephew, U.S.

David Pryor.

A few more highlights from Sheffield Nelson's

for helping reporters portray the Clintons in the

Stephens's personal assistant, Nelson was later

(Arkla), controlled by the Stephens family and

subsequent refusal to use Arkla pipelines to carry gas from other Stephens-owned companies to buyers east of the state that eventually provoked a lifelong blood feud of Shakespearean malevolence.) Until 1989 Nelson was a Democrat, im-

Clinton era. But when it became apparent that Clinton would run again in 1990, Nelson became a Republican and won the 1990 gubernatorial primary over an opponent funded by

to humiliate Nelson 58 percent to 42 percent in

conducted an inquiry into a business deal involving Nelson and a friend of Nelson's named Jerry Jones. It seems that back when Nelson was CEO

pany geologists and sold the drilling rights to what turned into a mammoth gas field in western Arkansas to Arkoma, a company owned by Jones, whom Nelson had brought onto Arkla's board of directors. The price was $15 million. Jones found gas almost everywhere he drilled. Two years after Nelson's departure, Arkla paid Jones and his associates a reported $175 million to buy the same leases back as well as some other properties. Jerry Jones then proceeded to

Bowls. The election-year probe of the Arkla-

funds to rate payers, which wasn't necessarily the point. It also earned the President a permanent spot on Sheffield Nelson's enemies list. The result, it's no exaggeration to say, has been

pent looking into another McDougal real-estate venture. Sheffield Nelson and Jerry Jones put

ry retirement community on Campobello Isla New Brunswick, Canada. It was New Deal De crat McDougal's odd conceit that wealthy cationers and retirees would be moved sentimental memories of FDR's summer re lots on a resort island that is in fact damp, c foggy, and remote. The Campobello project only failed but helped pull Madison Guara down with it. Gerth and the *Times* have left t aspect of the Madison Guaranty story un plored—even though, unlike Whitewater, name of Campobello Properties Ventures is m tioned prominently and repeatedly in the FHLBB examination report that Gerth quote his original March 8, 1992, article. Also un Whitewater, the Campobello project *did* put a chunk of Madison Guaranty's scant capita risk—some $3.73 million, to be exact, at a t when the FHLBB examiner contended th S&L was actually $70,000 in the hole.

At last report, that particular pictures stretch of Canadian coastline belonged to Resolution Trust Corporation. Nelson and Jo however, actually made a profit. In 1988, FHLBB, then supervising Madison Guaranty' sets, bought the boys out for $725,000—lea them a profit of $275,000. No doubt ther plausible explanation, although William S man, chief of the FDIC and the RTC at height of the S&L crisis, told the *Fort W Star-Telegram* that "I can't believe it. It's an traordinary event. It smells. It could be l but I doubt it." Gerth says the Campobello holds no interest for *Times* readers. But ima the uproar had your tax dollars bailed out Clintons rather than an embittered Republi politician feeding damaging all tions to the *New York Times*.

The same faults that mar Jeff Gerth's Whitewater—misleading innue and ignorance or suppression of exculpat facts—also showed up in the *Times* account Hillary Rodham Clinton's commodity tra with Springdale attorney Jim Blair and her h band's dealings with Tyson Foods. "During Clinton's tenure in Arkansas," Gerth wrote the top of his March 18, 1994, front-page count, "Tyson benefited from a variety of s actions, including $9 million in governm loans, the placement of company executive important state boards and favorable decisi on environmental issues." The alleged $9 m lion in loans was the implied quid pro quo fo pal Blair's generous tips to Hillary in the 19 that helped her turn $1,000 into ne

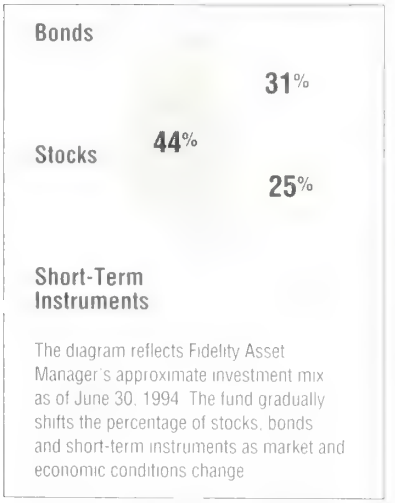
Following Gerth's report, the incriminatin million figure appeared virtually everywhere.

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of a new charge: helping Tyson Food
and Hillary tax credits. No sooner
she held her April 22 press conference
related issues than the *Times*
ted that the First Lady's performance had b
smooth but cleverly evasive. Particularly
pre cious, an April 24 editorial found, were
dealings with Jim Blair, "a lawyer for Ty
Foods, a large company that was heavily re
[illegible] and received *substantial* tax breaks
Arkansas government." [Emphasis added]
And people call the President slick!

The truth is far less lurid. The $7 million in
vestment tax credits Tyson Foods claimed aga
its Arkansas state tax bill after 1985—that
between seven and fourteen years after Hilla
commodity trades—were written into the sta
revenue code and were never Bill Clinton's to
stow or withhold. True, the Clinton Admi
tration did sponsor the 1985 legislation t
created the tax credits. It did so under stro
pressure, not from Tyson but from Internati
al Paper, which threatened to take its process
plants elsewhere unless Arkansas matched
breaks available from other states—a potent
ly severe economic blow to the already
southern half of the state. Far from being uni
to Arkansas, state investment tax credits
now the rule from sea to shining sea. One w
after the *Times* made its lame correction, Ty
announced the opening of a new plant in P
land, Indiana. According to a press release
Indiana Governor Evan Bayh, the state and
cal governments provided some $9 million
economic incentives—approximately eq
to what Tyson got from Arkansas d
ing Bill Clinton's six terms.

Elsewhere, nearly every bit of evidence
ed as proof of shady connections between t
Clintons and Tyson Foods in the *Times* March
1994, front-page story got the familiar Ge
treatment. Besides the imaginary $9 million
[illegible] cited several other suspicious tra
actions, among them a bitter court battle o
polluted groundwater in the town of Green F
est in which the Clinton Administration "fai
to take any significant action," and a pair
seemingly tainted appointments—including
naming a Tyson veterinarian to the state Li
stock and Poultry Commission and Jim Blair
the University of Arkansas board. An object
account of the court battle would have point
out that the city of Green Forest was itself a
fendant in the same lawsuit. Bill Clinton w
not. Officials of the Arkansas Department
Pollution Control and Ecology testified for t
plaintiffs against Tyson Foods. So much for
another dark Clintonian conspiracy.

T

"certainly [don't] smell
Arkansas that later re-
ceived what seemed to be
order," involving a moderate Clinton, a liberal
Clinton, and "the likely suspect in the Whitewa-
whatever necessary to get and keep office in
Arkansas . . . granting low-interest loans to not-
Stephens brothers, Witt and Jackson." (Witt
Stephens has been dead for three years, and Jack
cept Sheffield Nelson—since the early 1980s.)

There's just one problem with this chorus of
self-righteous denunciation: the $9 million in
loans that inspired it never existed. Especially at-
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

Reappointing a Tyson veterinarian to the ivestock and Poultry Commission? Clinton is ty as charged. Except that the fellow happens be the state's ranking expert on chicken dis-es, the prevention and treatment of which is commission's principal task. As for naming h Blair himself to the University of Arkansas rd? Well, it's quite an honor, and Blair can fiendishly score great Razorback tickets. Oth-ise, where's the scandal? At any rate, Blair isn't a Tyson employee back when he and lary did their cattle trades. He was in pri-e practice as one of Springdale's most promi-nt corporate attorneys, representing banks, cking companies, insurance firms, and poul-interests.

Gerth portrayed chicken mogul Don Tyson a major Clinton supporter and fund-raiser, e whose close ties to the President had "been bject of debate for years in Little Rock and hich] became an issue during the 1992 Presi-ntial campaign." The fact is that Clinton's tles with Tyson and the poultry industry are endary in Arkansas. After Clinton failed to spor an effort by the poultry and trucking bies to raise the truck weight limit to 80,000 nds, Tyson backed his Republican opponent, nk White, in 1980 and 1982 and refused to ak to Clinton for years. When Clinton final-gave in on the 80,000-pound limit (making kansas the last of the states to do so), he shed through the legislature an unusual "ton-le" tax on eighteen wheelers—scaling the fee the weight and distance they drove on kansas highways. The ton-mile tax was even-lly thrown out after a bitter court battle. (In ping with tradition, a profile of Clinton in *The w York Times Magazine* by Michael Kelly last y omitted the political context and cited the ne fight as evidence of Clinton's spineless-ss.)

Like most Arkansans, Tyson did back Clin-n's 1983 educational reforms and made rela-ely modest campaign contributions from then —something that was clearly prudent on the t of one of the state's largest private em-yers. But in the legislature the poultry and cking industries fought virtually every Clin-n initiative. Indeed it was Clinton's anger at poultry industry and the Stephens interests, ong others, after they combined to beat back alf-cent education sales tax in 1987 that pro-ked him to create a statewide "blue-ribbon" nel to write Arkansas's first meaningful ethics l disclosure law. After the selfsame "special in-ests" gutted the thing during a special ses-n, Clinton dissolved the legislative session, led effort to put the new standard on the ballot an initiated act, campaigned for it hard, and n. (*Times* editorial writers may be interested to know that New York Governor Mario Cuomo's having earned $270,000 in 1992 giving speeches might constitute a felony here in darkest Arkansas.)

Don Tyson did throw in with the governor on one notable issue during Clinton's last go-around with the Arkansas legislature. A charter member of the so-called Good Suit Club—a group of wealthy bankers and businessmen, like the late Sam Walton of Wal-Mart, who met informally to encourage educational reform—Tyson endorsed Clinton's plan to levy a 1/2 of 1 percent increase in the corporate income tax to benefit community technical colleges, helping the bill win the necessary three-fourths vote. Quick, somebody call Gerth at the *New York Times* and notify the special prosecutor. Something tells me they're fixing to load those technical colleges up with poultry-science courses.

All of this raises the *really* interesting question at the heart of the Whitewater scandal: why—with representatives of the vaunted national press camped out in Little Rock for weeks at a time, squinting over aged public documents and pontificating nightly at the Capital Hotel bar—has nobody blown the whistle on Gerth and the *New York Times*? There are several reasons, ambition and fear among them. It is always safest to run with the pack, and editors who invest thousands of dollars on a scandal don't normally want to hear that there's no scandal to be found. Reporters who *have* challenged aspects of the official version, like Greg Gordon and Tom Hamburger of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* and John Camp of CNN, have not found their celebrity enhanced. Those who have tried to split the difference, like the reporters for *Time* magazine—which has always reported (albeit parenthetically) that Arkansas bank regulators treated Madison Guaranty sternly—have ended up producing accounts as muddled and self-referential as a John Barth novel. "The dealings in question," *Time*'s George Church wrote last January 24, "are so complex that it is difficult even to summarize the suspicions they arouse, let alone cite the evidence supporting such suspicions. . . . Violations of law, if any, would be extremely difficult to prove." And people call Clinton mealymouthed.

Regional bias and cultural condescension play a part, too. How could the *New York Times* be wrong and the *Arkansas Times* be right? But even if Bill Clinton had been governor of Connecticut instead of Arkansas, in the post-Watergate, post-everythinggate culture no reporter wishes to appear insufficiently prosecutorial—particularly not when the suspects are the President and his wife. By definition they've got to be guilty of something; it may as well be Whitewater. ■

A JOB AT LITTLE HENRY'S

By Bill Roorbach



R

America clear to Mont a
Indeed, Richard had
signed every home t
marketed, designed th
for beauty, designed th
for comfort, designed th
for the earth-friendly
pects Molina Log Ho
advertised, designed th
for profit too, and so
logs could be shipped pr
aboard ever smaller tru
Lester had talked lugu
ously for an hour ab
housing starts and the s
economy, but his theatr
ly sad eyes couldn't h
what had really happe
Richard Milk had drawn
the designs Lester Mo
needed to do his huge b
ness forever, and so L
had let him go.

Oh, yes, on Tuesday the long w
end was over. Richard stood in
yard an hour after breakfast (Gail
in her safe red Saab), just s
and looked at the hills across the
The thief Dewey turned up exactl
time. Richard saw him coming up
road, slouching along with his bo
ing reform-school swagger. Rich
felt calm, told himself a few enc
aging words, tried a sentence out
understand if you don't want to ad
right away, but . . .

Then the bum was at the d
"It was a decent day—m
saying just those words, with n
flection at all, no way to sense
man: "Decent day."

"Nice 'un," Richard said. "Y
He found himself talking the



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the weather that he hoped was more

the sky tells us, I think it's going to be

Dewey had no more conversation in him, turned and walked back around the house to the shed, pulled

Thursday, digging out the old com-

the garden. Richard followed him more slowly, choosing words: *But call for help when we hear it. You've worked for us faithfully for over a year. You won't be fired. We only want . . .*

hadn't seemed the least bit con-

was all she said, meaning that Richard had to get rid of him, of course.

"Mister."

"Dewey, there's something about which I want to speak to you."

ment, waiting for the slight twitch, a single word, the tiniest rea son to resume the beating, let seemed to decide that Richard wa through and walked off with the im slow swaggering sleic as always.

The sheriff's deputy who tur up late in the afternoon sat in his ca for five minutes talking on the rad only opened his door when Richar came out of the house. By now bo of Richard's eyes were black, an o course his nose hurt. He didn't thi his ribs were broken, but he'd bou to consider a call to Dr. LeMoni (pronounced locally as Lemon "Be to ask about his leg, which ach deeply, ached to the femur. Gi wasn't going to believe this.

"Looking good," the deputy sid swinging his legs out of the car u remaining seated. He pulled a t notepad from his shirt pocket, p duced a pen.

"Thank you," Richard said.

"Dewey Burke's one tough rat sir. I'd think twice about fighti him again."

"I wasn't *fighting* him. He attack me. Right back there. Punched over and over, kicked me in the g knocked me down, all because I c fronted him about some money h stolen." Into Richard's voice had cr the clipped quality of the deputy's. H tried to cut it out: "He stole mo from us in two days of work: forty-fi dollars the first time—we hop maybe it had just been misplaced fourteen the second time, which s when I decided to talk to him ab it."

The deputy put on a practic skeptical frown. He hadn't writte word on his pad. "You have proof stole it?"

"Well, of course. He was the o one here. Both Tuesday and Thu day."

"Your kids didn't take it?"

"The kids are in college, sir, bo of them."

"You keep your doors locked The deputy seemed to be looki over Richard's shoulder.

"Well, not generally, not wh we're around, of course. Probably s dom. Mostly just when we're away.

'So anyone could have come right
and took the money, correct?"
'But who on earth would do that?"
'Drug addicts."
Richard smiled wearily, gave a
od natured shake of his head:
ou're getting a little outlandish,
"
'Friends of your kids, maybe."
Richard struggled to stay calm. Here
rural Maine his children had found
mselves viewed as artsy types, and
deputy would certainly know that,
ow exactly how long Ricky's hair
s and see in his mind the many col-
of Cindy's tie-dyed shirts, see the
ls' sweet bunch of friends gathered
ying Frisbee in the little park near
County Court Building. "My chil-
n's friends are among the most
nest in town, Mr. Springer."
"Just borrowing a few bucks,
ybe. Don't get weepy—I'm just
oking for the facts here. And the
ts is you don't have any evidence
t Dewey Burke stole anything
atsoever at all."
Richard had learned to stay quiet a
minute when insulted or angry, and so he did, stood quietly, looking away from the deputy, who looked away from him, still holding his unpoised pen and his empty pad, still making no sign that he'd get out of the car to investigate.

Finally Richard said, "Let's get to the point. I was attacked. A dangerous felon is loose."

"Would you like to press charges?"

"Do I need to press charges?"

"Well, in the case of fights, generally we won't make an arrest unless there's been property damage."

"This wasn't a fight, Mr. Springer, as I've repeatedly told you."

"You mean you didn't get a single punch in?"

"I told you, sir, it was not a fight."

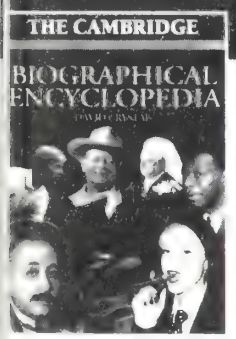
"Well, if you want to make a federal case out of it . . ." The deputy swung his legs back into the car, shut his door, sat staring out the windshield, seeming to try to decide whether to say what he was about to say. Then quietly, confidentially: "You'll want to know that if old
anything at all, he
to
time

Gail Miller's house
of the monthly school board
home to a darkened house. She
Richard on the kitchen floor holding his leg. Soon, in the emergency room at LaDoux County Hospital, they learned that he had suffered a hematoma, an intramuscular blood clot, which, as Dr. LeMonteau said, could certainly be unbearably painful but which wasn't particularly dangerous, unless the clot were to loosen and travel through the chambers of Richard's heart and to his brain, where it would certainly kill him. Dr. LeMonteau said this was unlikely. Richard had two cracked ribs as well.

Not much to do for that, just rest and heal.

Thursday morning, about the time Dewey would normally have appeared, a young woman came instead.

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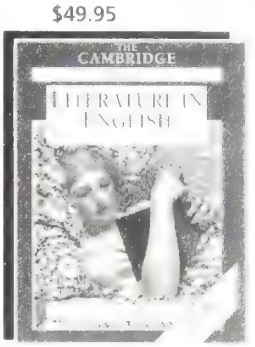
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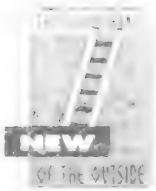


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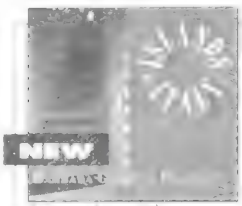
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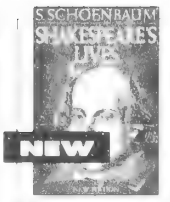
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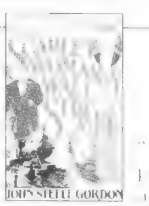
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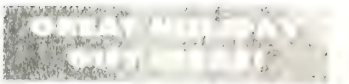
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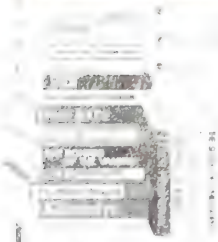


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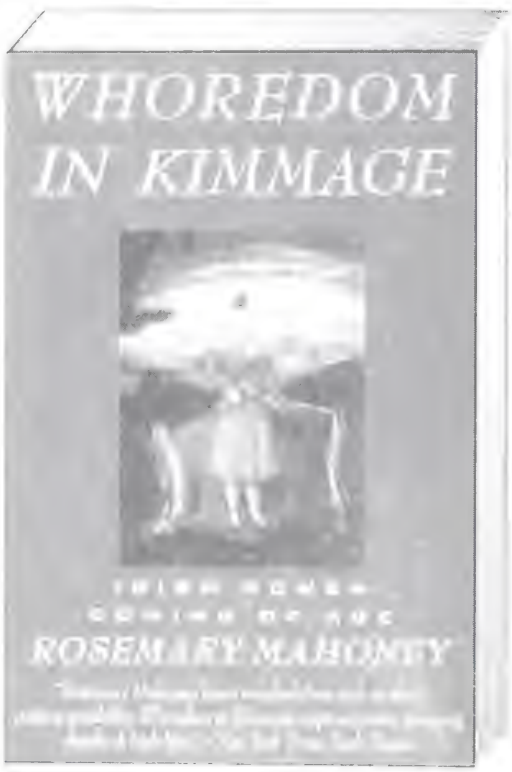


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Her hair looked partly washed. She appeared weary but intelligent, very bright in the eyes, somet... Richard was ashamed not to ex... from the depths of a mobile h... surrounded by old snow machi... and car parts and doghouses. He... breasts were large and upstanding in... der her T-shirt, her nipples wall... under the worn cloth. Her legs a... hips were as unnaturally narrow a... undernourished child's. Dewey's gi... friend. Holding a rhubarb pie.

Richard accepted the pie... solemnly as it was offered, stood in... the doorway holding it, facing the... unpretty woman.

She spoke earnestly: "Mr. Mi... Dew says sorry for fucking you... He's really sorry. But he just d... steal from you, and that's what... him off. He just didn't steal noth... Never has. That's not his thing. ... he's been in trouble plenty, so w... he's finally straightened out it w... flipped him out. Know what I mea... God, you look awful."

"It's not so bad."

"So can he come back t... work?"

Tuesday Dewey was back. He went immediately to the compo... pile and resumed what he'd been ... ing a week past when Richard ... confronted him: shoveling humus ... to the Milks' red yard cart. Richa... watched from the kitchen windo... The man worked no faster than ... had before. He never looked up ... the house, just shoveled the compo... wheeled the cart to the garde... spread the rich new earth. By n... morning he was done and had turn... to the rototilling.

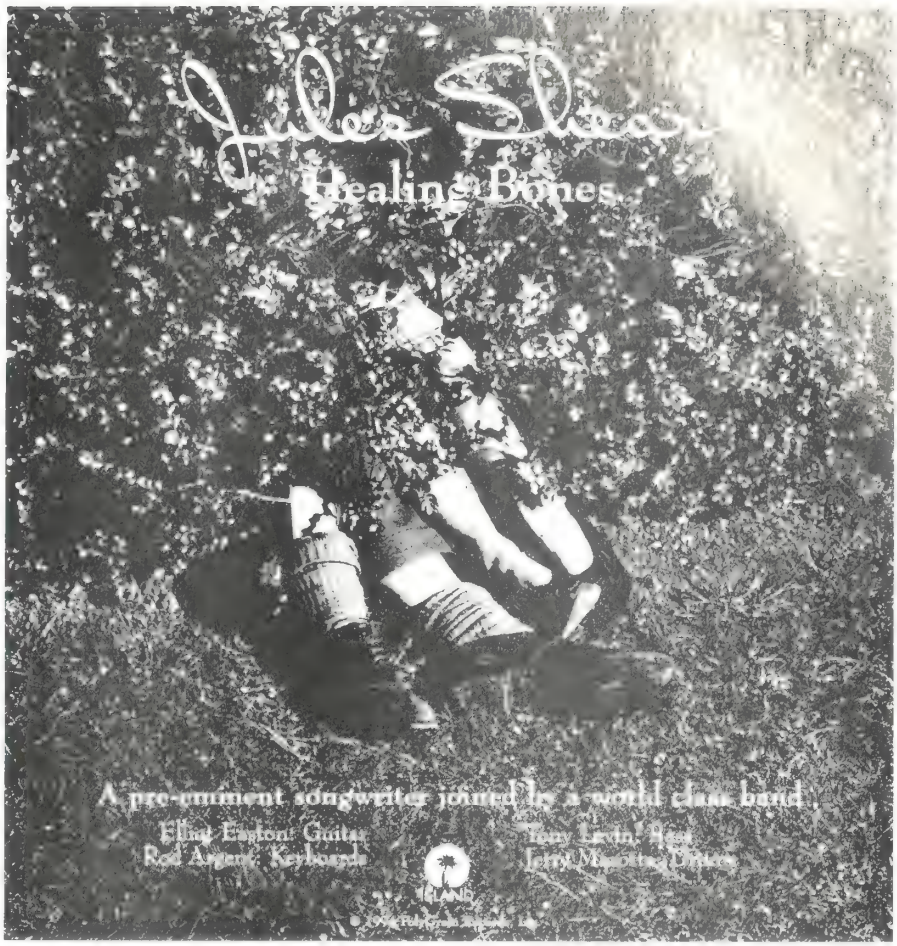
Normally, Dewey stopped for lu... —came up to the house, polit... washed up at the kitchen sink, t... the sandwich Richard offered, and ... it alone outside. Today, Dew... skipped lunch altogether. He got ... lawn mower out and paced the ... lawn with it, stopping frequently ... empty the bag of clippings into a ... pile in the compost bin.

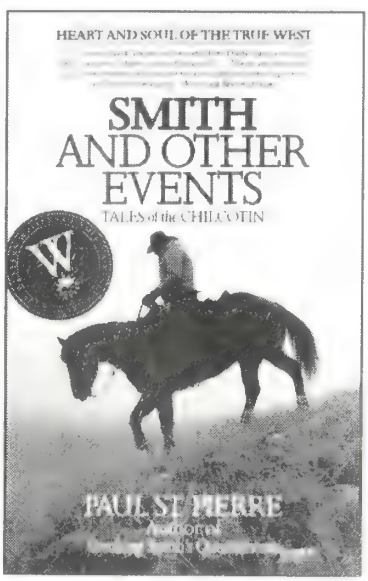
Richard tried to get to his stu... ing. He meant to pass the archit... ture boards this fall. He'd failed tw... out of grad school, then got the ... with Molina and quit trying.

dving would be a full-time occupa
n till October. Richard sat at his
iwing board and opened two
oks. He stared at the wall. He felt
ngry, restless, bored, overwhelmed,
he had to get a look at Dewey.
ke sure Dewey seemed all right.
e man mowed the lawn in record
ne, stood sweating by the toolshed,
king a cigarette with shreds of to-
co from his tattered pouch. Six
lars an hour wasn't much for all
Dewey did. Six dollars an
hour wasn't much at all.

Alone at home on Saturday
al at a high-school track meet
endless cheery obligations, the
ldren not yet home from their re-
ctive wild college towns), Richard
ttered awhile, feeling cheerful,
arly healed. He whistled and felt
sitively euphoric, as if a sound beat-
from Dewey were all one needed
clear the doubt from one's head,
ck depression from one's shoulder.
He studied distractedly, drew
ddings in the allotted ninety min-
s while his oven timer ticked,
w based on what he knew the re-
nts of the architecture boards
uld want to see. Richard worked
spite himself till lunch, then stood
the yard, looking at all the good
wey had wrought. And suddenly,
xplicably, he had to see the man.
length, he collected Dewey's girl-
nd's untouched pie from the re-
erator, slid it from its pan (just a
thing, not even the right size for
ne, probably saved from some
zen meal) and into the compost
cket. He washed the tin: one
ded an excuse for visiting along
Avon road.

Pie tin in hand, Richard walked
ckly down the road, suddenly
are of his new boating shoes, his
ght socks, his purple shorts. Soon
was back in his house, searching
closet for clothes to wear to
wey's. And in a black T-shirt from
son's drawer, blue jeans, work
ts (both jeans and boots mortify-
ly unscathed by work), Richard
cked on Dewey's trailer door.
knock was superfluous, four dark
s bellowed Richard's presence,
ming at their chains, all bright
h and noise.





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Dewey had friends over. One of them, a large fellow in a clean shirt, came and blocked the door. "Yeah?" he said.

"I'm a neighbor," Richard said. "Just out walking around, thought I'd [illegible]"

The man in the door looked him over.

Richard said, "Dewey here?"

"Dewey ain't."

The dogs barked full throat now, and something was going on in the small living room behind the big fellow.

Dewey came up silently behind Richard, having somehow sneaked out of the trailer and come around the back side, startled him with a rough tap on the shoulder. Richard spun.

Dewey looked disgusted, said, "[illegible]"

"Yup. Me."

"You all better?"

"I'm okay, I guess." He gave a smile in anticipation of an apology, but an apology didn't come, and the men simply stood, a dooryard tableau, still as stumps. "I brought back your pie plate."

"Go in, Jim, s'okay."

The big man—Jim—stepped back. At the kitchen table a younger fellow hulked, staring. He had something hidden in his lap. Seeing Richard, seeing Dewey behind him, the kid breathed, relaxed, put two stout handguns on the table. Jim said a flat laugh: huh huh huh. Richard noticed that the place was very clean, very tidy (cheaply furnished, to be sure), decent, nice.

"Have a sit," Dewey said.

[illegible] wanted to run out the door, but didn't want to appear to be shaken [illegible] which were, after all, perfectly legal. [illegible] gambit turned out to be a hilarious joke, the laughter long and hard and followed by a kind of formally granted but clearly temporary acceptance.

Dewey broke out a six-pack of Picls beer, and soon Richard was drinking his second can. By noon he was shar[illegible] plots (these didn't seem as funny or [illegible] wherein car windows were smashed and this guy's head was cracked against a wall, and in which women were objectified and African American people disparaged, and Asians named gooks, the wife of the President of the United States called a cunt, the President himself a fag. It seemed all three men were on parole, and all three for violent crimes just short of murder. They were funny men, good at stories. They were brave men too, in a fashion. They had a certain nobility, Richard thought. They were also definitely crazy, and probably dangerous. When Richard told them the story of losing his job, they offered to drive down to Turnerville and beat Lester Molina till he was bloody and dead.

At one o'clock the woman who'd delivered the pie came out of the back room, appeared as if from exile, carrying a little boy, four or maybe five or even six years old, too old, in any case, to need to be carried. But she never put him down. Impassive, she made plain white-bread sandwiches and held her boy and exerted a huge presence in the room in silence. The men only drank their beer while she worked, the conversation embarrassed to a halt in front of her.

So Richard said, "What's the boy's name?" He had drunk four beers.

No reply.

Richard tried again: "The kid, what's his name?"

"That's Don't He," big Jim said.

"What?"

"That's Don't He."

"Dewey and Don't He," the kid with the guns said, and he and Jim laughed.

"Don't he look like Dewey?" Jim said.

"Do he or don't he?" the young man—Baker—said.

Dewey said, "Leem alone," but his voice was mild; this wordplay was some kind of old joke.

"Don't He," Jim said one more [illegible]

The woman put the sandwiches on the table. The child stayed in the crook of her arm. His mother didn't glower, exactly, but the look on her face was no longer impassive. Something murderous was alive in her. She said, "He's Jeremy Charles, h[illegible] his grandfather."

Richard said, "Hi, Jeremy," a[illegible] the kid buried his face in his mo[illegible] er's neck.

She went back into the bedroo[illegible] closed the door.

The men ate. When his sandwi[illegible] was gone down his throat, Richard [illegible] gan to think of graceful exit lines. [illegible] got up and went outside. Richard he[illegible] him piss, heard him open the door[illegible] his truck, cheered with the others wh[illegible] he saw the bottle of Old Grandd[illegible] though it didn't make him glad.

Later, Richard would puke on [illegible] side of the Avon road, then again [illegible] the end of his driveway holding h[illegible] sore ribs, then twice in his bathr[illegible] where Gail would find him; but b[illegible] now the afternoon stretched ahe[illegible] and the stories were good, and he h[illegible] joyed the company of what he'd r[illegible] ized suddenly were good men—ro[illegible] men, surely, maybe not the smar[illegible] guys on the face of the earth, but r[illegible] he seemed to have r[illegible] judged.

Dewey stopped coming to w[illegible] And because Dewey had no phon[illegible] seemed to Richard after a coupl[illegible] weeks that another visit to the tr[illegible] down the road was in order. He n[illegible] ed Dewey's help around the yar[illegible] told himself. And he told Gail [illegible] same when she said they were b[illegible] off rid of Dewey: "You'd think he [illegible] your only friend," she said. "Y[illegible] think you didn't notice that he [illegible] from us and beat your face and [illegible] made you sick with alcohol when [illegible] tried to reach out to him."

"Well, with your schedule [illegible] need the company."

Gail sighed at this pale jest, [illegible] introduction of an old issue bet[illegible] them.

"Kidding," Richard said. "I'm [illegible] kidding. But, really, I'm just g[illegible] over to see if he wants work. I'l[illegible] go see him, that's all. I think th[illegible] needs help. I think the guy n[illegible] me."

Gail hugged Richard with [illegible] teacherly warmth and said, "W[illegible] fine. Go get Dewey. But don't c[illegible] home barfing." This last was the [illegible] of joke she made to announce [illegible] end of an argument.

:hard laughed, remembering
lay. Somehow the puking had
him a feeling of youth, had
ght him back to a time when
was sensible didn't usually turn
be what was right or needed.
a Saturday early in July he
d as a workingman, left Gail to
reparations for that afternoon's
uncheon, and headed on foot
the Avon road. He hoped
y would be home. He hoped big
nd Baker would be there. He
Jeremy Charles—Don't He—
l be there with his protective
And maybe today he'd have a
Maybe today he'd have a beer
nen another, and then as much
ey as Dewey. Who was to say
ouldn't? And maybe today he'd
more of the jokes he'd made,
he guys would laugh as they had
, and maybe tomorrow he'd be
Maybe he would, and what was
with that?

one answered his knock at the
door. He waited, knocked, and
some more, then gave up. As
lked away, Dewey tapped him
e shoulder, having appeared
nowhere and silently behind
When Richard turned, Dewey
nded to hit him with a left,
H-T, then stabbed him with a
id knife in a tightly squeezed
Dewey didn't smile. A normal
would smile after a joke like

ard said, "Just wondered if you
to come back and work."
t another job."
. Well, good. Good for you.
."
decent."
ard looked up over the trailer,
looked out toward the road, a
silence in the dryness of the
nally Richard said, "Got any

ey shook his head. "No way.

ard just shook his head. He
decision, said, "Naw. But let's
us some." *Get us some:* he was
like he thought Dewey
Screw it: "And we can do us
whiskey too."

ey said nothing, but went back
s trailer for a long minute.
he returned, the two men walked in silence back to Richard's. Gail had left. Good. They climbed in the new minivan. Dewey didn't want to go to the store in town, insisted they go all the way out to the general store in Leslie, a twenty-mile drive.

"Why not?" Richard said. He'd never been to Leslie.

To the Leslie store in silence. And in silence Richard and Dewey stood in front of the shelves of liquor, Richard feeling the money in his pocket, knowing he'd be the one to have to pay. Dewey picked out a *half gallon* of expensive whiskey, the most expensive they had, then motioned for Richard to pick his own. So Richard did, adding the prices in his head, then shrugging it off: sixty bucks, so what? They walked to the counter, waited behind another customer, a woman who had a hundred questions about birdseed. Dewey nudged Richard, nodded subtly, meaningfully. Richard nodded back, as if he knew the meaning in the nod. When the counter person bent to find the price list for sunflower seed, Dewey leaped at the door, burst outside, ran to the van carrying his whiskey. The woman at the counter stood up and looked after him, looked quizzically at Richard. He paused, felt the money in his pocket, said, "Ah…"

Then he jumped, too—burst out the door, into the hot sun, ran across the pavement. Behind him he heard the woman say, "Hey!" and that was all. She didn't even run after them. Probably she was calling the cops.

Dewey had taken the driver's seat, so Richard had to adjust his flight at the last second and hop in the passenger side of his own little van. He flung Dewey the keys, and before anyone could get a good look they were out of there in a blasting cloud of front-wheel-drive dust and gravel, out of there and flying down Route 2 faster than Richard had ever dared drive. Somewhere before New Sharon, Dewey fishtailed off the highway and into the mouth of a dirt road, and they bounced in the ruts to the woods.

"Jesus," Richard said.

Dewey said, "Never pay for a drink." He slowed down on the awful road. At a bend in the Sandy River, far from the main road, far from any house, far from responsibility and fear, high up on a bluff over rapids, Dewey parked. He opened his bottle and drank.

Richard's breathing slowed gradually. He opened his own bottle, hefted it to his lips. The whiskey turned him hot. Careful not to smile, he said, "That was a blast."

They watched the river.

"'A blast,'" Dewey said, mocking him. Then he was quiet. After several good slugs from his huge bottle he said, "Think you got the nuts for a real job?"

Richard knew what Dewey meant. He straightened and used his own voice, an architect's voice: "The nuts? I would say yes. The desire? No."

"Same thing," Dewey said.

"Shit, Dew. Forget it." His Dewey voice.

"I have this idea."

"Dew, forget it."

They drank from the ungainly bottles and watched the river and hardly said anything at all. Before long Richard found himself unable to prevent a smile; he kept grinning and laughing and patting his bottle of booze. "I'm as happy as I've been in years," he said.

Dewey seemed barely to hear him.

Because Richard had wondered aloud whether Dewey was married, big Jim called him Wedding Bells. Soon this was shortened by Dewey to Bells, which seemed to stick. Happily, huge Jim was in the back of the minivan during the hour's ride to Little Henry's in Port Lawrence. Back there all his jabs and jive and nervous patter seemed contained.

Little Henry's was a rural convenience store, and Dewey had somehow learned that on Sundays the owner was stupid enough to keep all the money from the whole busy tourist weekend in a little safe in back—as much as $10,000 (which to Richard didn't sound like as grand a sum as it clearly did to Dewey and Jim)—such a little safe that Dewey knew Jim could lift it and carry it. Jim had been carrying rocks around for weeks—rocks twice the weight of the safe—and was ready.

Richard was to be the driver. He found it hard to believe he'd agreed

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...that. But the plan and his p... within it had fallen together ir... memorably, melodiously. Richard ... drunk with the boys and enjoyed ... conversations—been part of the ... spiracy. He honestly thought it ... just talk, thought nothing was ... going to come of it, thought Jim ... putting enormous rocks in the va... a kind of conceptual exercise, n... ing more. Yet there was a pre... night when Richard had said ye... precise night he'd taken Dewy's ... hand and shaken it a long damn ... and said yes right in Dewey's ... eyes. Dewey's logic had been u... sailable: young Baker was back ... (he'd punched his parole offi... and the gang needed a dr... Richard's minivan was perfect (... paneling even—cute, like some... you'd drive nuns in); Richard ... Dewey's voice dropped solem... was by now part of the gang, a ... was like the marines, or the m... fuckingteers: all for one, one for ...

So Richard had clasped Dew... hand, said yes. The very next m... ing, pleading at Dewey's d... Richard tried to make it no. ... Dewey Burke put an arm ar... Richard's neck and dragged ... roughly into the trailer's kitc... pulled a big carving knife out ... broken drawer, poked the point ... Richard's forehead, drawing b... touching skull. He said: "You g... quit?" After a very long pause D... let go, put the knife away, sai... was kidding, said, "Go ahead, ... Eye, quit if you want."

Richard hadn't quit, so really ... said yes twice. By day the decisio... him exhilarated. Nights, he ... poorly, wanted to wake Gail, de... ately wanted to shake Gail fro... overworked exhaustion and slu... and confess all. But if he ever ... her she'd only say he was a dop... too idle, turn back to sleep, a... the morning drive off to her me... just the same. At night he thou... Dewey's woman, thought of De... kid, thought of his own kids, pla... how he'd back out of this thing, ... he'd tell Gail, then Dewey, how ... that would really be.

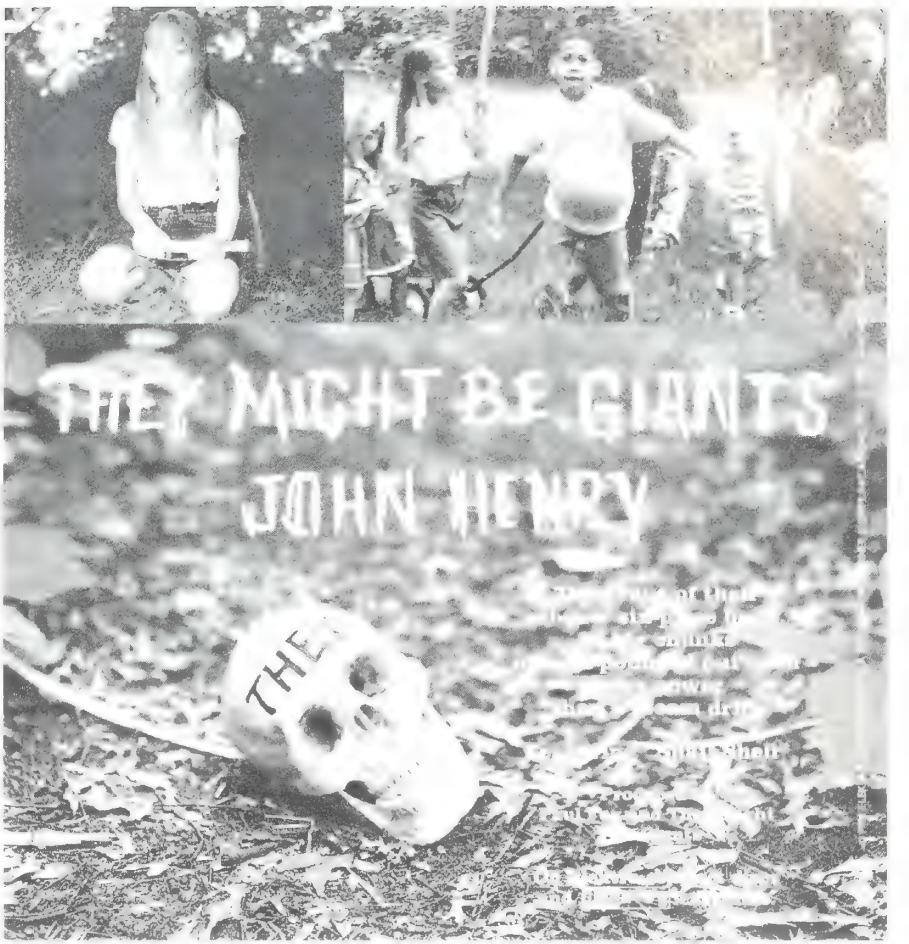
But by day he did the researc... quired of him: the exact mileage ... Little Henry's to the state police ...

Is, the exact mileage to the Port
rence police department, the ex-
mileage to the Ledyard County
iff's office, the exact distance on
te 2 from Little Henry's to home,
exact distance on Route 124, the
nce to all of twelve different log-
roads they might disappear on,
distance to two gravel pits and a
ry in which they might hide it
wey's grave concern) the pigs
bullshit.

)h, Richard liked the excitement,
having such a fine secret from
l. He liked his acceptance by
s who had never noticed him at
He liked how his wardrobe had
nged (black T-shirts, a big black
, heavy boots). He liked the way
stopped fitting in at Gail's many
heons and dinners, liked how
it was to skip them. And he
d his afternoons at Dewey's: the
araderie, the hilarity, the feeling
e guys would take care of him.

They'd all been to Little Henry's
e now, knew where the safe was
hind a white door that said EM-
YEES ONLY, next to a grimy toilet
the clerk had let Richard use);
w that Sunday night the kid at
counter (named Pete) would be
he; knew that the nearest police
ion (actually the Port Lawrence
n office) was nearly eleven miles
the store; knew that the Sunday-
ht police shift was the lightest of
week (one cop, who hung out in
station with the lady dispatcher,
king coffee); knew that the much
e professional state police tended
ay toward the coast on the inter-
e. The gang made a bunch of
ingency plans, even practiced a
le of routes home, and worked
their way to the night
they'd picked: July 23.

A hot night. Richard drove,
ing fervently that he'd said no
n no was still possible. Dewey
Jim insisted on displaying their
handguns in the car. They
fted them up, stared at them,
d them maggies and bones.
er, languishing in prison, had
ated his firepower to the cause
exchange for a 10 percent cut.
hard had opted not to go lumpy,
e boys put it, not to carry a gun,





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THE OVERSELLING OF AMERICA

Thursday, October 13, 1994, 7:00 P.M.
Old South Meeting House
310 Washington Street, Boston, Massachusetts

[illegible] will present a public program entitled *The Overselling of America: Are We a Nation Overrun By* [illegible] author of *A Nation of Salesmen: The Tyranny of the Market and the Subversion of Culture*; John R. MacArthur, publisher of *Harper's Magazine*, and Mark Crispin Miller, associate professor of creative writing at Johns Hopkins University and author [illegible]

[illegible] oldest public lecture series in the nation, [illegible] forum has often stood on the cutting edge [illegible] world. Past speakers have included [illegible]

[illegible] public. For more information, call

because he couldn't use one [illegible] had one, and had no intentio[illegible] shooting or threatening anyon[illegible] intention of getting out of the [illegible] for that matter. He would sit [illegible] in jacket and tie, as planned, [illegible] earn his 30 percent quietly.

So in the parking lot at L[illegible] Henry's, the night dark, Ric[illegible] waited. He watched the mirrors [illegible] no one else drove in. Dead nigh[illegible] most quitting time. He saw D[illegible] through the big store window, D[illegible] poking through the potato chip[illegible] couldn't see Jim. He couldn't se[illegible] clerk either, which was the idea: [illegible] couldn't see the clerk, the [illegible] couldn't see him, couldn't see th[illegible] hicle for an I.D. It had been Ric[illegible] idea, in fact, to smear mud on t[illegible] cense plates. No one in the mirr[illegible]

Richard needed something f[illegible] stomach, needed to crap, ne[illegible] something to eat, needed the ne[illegible] teen minutes to be over, fast. H[illegible] Dewey step to the counter with [illegible] of popcorn. He saw big Jim ste[illegible] too, saw Dewey yank the gun [illegible] his pants, saw Jim do the same [illegible] his, big guns in their hands, [illegible] Dewey yelling something Ric[illegible] could almost hear. They wave[illegible] guns and shook them, fingers o[illegible] triggers, looking profoundly [illegible] Richard moaned with fear. No [illegible] the mirror. Gail in the den at [illegible] mad at him for going drinking [illegible] Dewey leaning over the cou[illegible] handfuls of bills and checks an[illegible] stamps, looking mean, saying [illegible] thing. The kid clerk must be [illegible] down now, as per the plan. Jim [illegible] the picture, gone to get the sa[illegible] the mirror, nothing. Richard re[illegible] bered his job, leaned across the [illegible] rest into the back of the van, sl[illegible] side door open so the van wou[illegible] ready to accept the safe. Dewey [illegible] ing his pockets. No sign of [illegible] Richard flicked his gaze to the r[illegible] *Shit:* cop car, entering the lot s[illegible] no flashing lights, no siren.

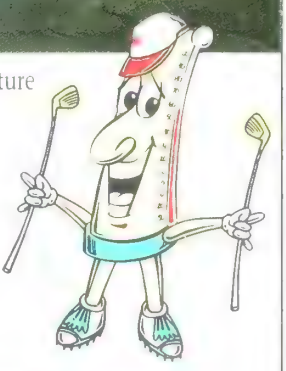
Richard thought about ho[illegible] the horn, then realized that [illegible] seem suspicious. He got out [illegible] van, oddly calm, walked int[illegible] store, announced it: "Cops."

Jim was just coming out [illegible] bathroom backward, carrying th[illegible] an inch off the floor. Clearly [illegible]

vier than the rocks he'd been
tting with.
Cops," Richard said again, louder.
stood like a customer at the
nter, looked casually out. Two
cemen, staties, as Dewey called
n, big men, one of them smiling,
shing some joke as he climbed
of the car.
Dewey said, "Go behind. Like you
k here." He ducked down in one
he small aisles.
Richard stepped behind the
nter. The clerk lay on top of old
ipts with his face to the lino-
n, panting. Jim left the safe in the
dle of the floor, hopped back into
bathroom.
The cop came in.
Hello," Richard said.
New guy," the cop said, perfectly
lar. "What'd they fire Pete?"
The kid on the floor said, "Here!"
d, "Robbing! Guns!"
The cop didn't even have time to
k confused or respond before
ey stood and blasted at him. The
t was bad, smashed the big store
dow. The second shot was better,
ned to catch the cop's shoulder.
e gun was loud in that little place,
der than the practice shots.
Jesus," Richard cried. He was go-
to jail forever. He was going to
Gail in the warm den right now,
up, with a book.
The cop wheeled and fell to the
r and scurried forward, pushing
door open. His partner was
k, was on the radio, was out of
car, and both of them were be-
d it with guns drawn before Jim
out of the bathroom. He'd missed
at happened, maybe thought
ey had got it, ran to the front of
store with his gun waving,
ned the door even as he saw the
ation, took several bullets in his
st, and fell. The kid on the floor
Richard's feet—Pete—flinched
didn't try to move.
Dewey peeked over the tampons,
. "Get over here, Bells."
ut Richard couldn't.
Dewey waved the gun: "Get your
-dick over here!"
ichard put his hands in the air so
cops would see he was unarmed,
ped from behind the counter.
ey leaped behind him, put the gun

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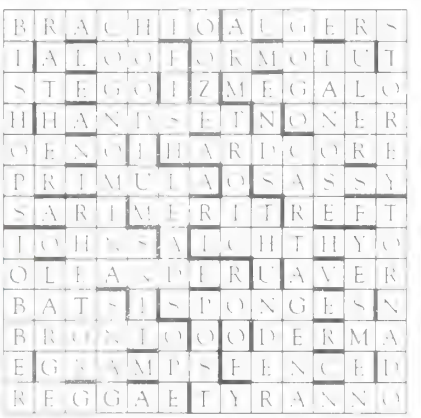
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SOLUTION TO THE SEPTEMBER PUZZLE



NOTES FOR "THESAURUS"

I included [illegible] lights were considering, but the various saurians, with their meanings as the included [illegible] lights [illegible] TYRANNO/RULER. *Note: anagrams are indicated with an asterisk (*).*

ACROSS: 6. A-L(GER)S; 10. ALOOF, hidden; 12. ORMO*-LU xury; 17. HA(N)DSET*; 19. RENO reversed; 20. ONE-merlot, reversed; 21. HARDCORE*; 23. A-LUM(I-R)E reversed; 25. SA(Sauternes)S, 26. IRA'S reversed; 28. M-ERIT (rev.); 30. REEFT*; 32. JOH(N)S', 36. OLEANDER*; 39. AVERage, 40. BATS, two meanings; 42. SPONGES*; 46. DER(rev.)-MA, 47. G-RAMPS; 48. FE(N.C.)E; 49. EAG(G)ER reversed

DOWN: 1. BIS-HOPS; 2. RATHER, hidden; 3. COCONOMINA*; 4. HOOD-I-monUMent; 5. (s-n)OOZE; 7. G-O-G-O; 9. STORE-monarchY; 13. LA-NOSE; 16. BENDS, 18. TROI*-C; 22. CARTAGE-NA; 24. LEADS, two meanings; 27. RHETt-OR; 31. TORN-A-DO; 32. JO(BB)E-Restaurant; 33. SNIT*; 35. YESMEN*; 41. S-NAG; 43. POST, two meanings; 45. OPE(r)*

SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER DOUBLE ACROSTIC (NO. 141). (ALLAN) BLOOM: THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MIND. As it now stands, students have powerful incentives to adopt a perfect body and pursue it incessantly. But deprived of literary guidance, they no longer have any image of a perfect soul, and hence do not long to have one. They do not even imagine that there is such a thing.

CONTEST RULES: Send the quotation, the name of the author, and the title of the work, together with your name and address, to Double Acrostic No. 142, *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If you already subscribe to *Harper's*, please include a copy of your latest mailing label. Entries must be received by October 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened at random will receive [illegible] prizes. [illegible] November issue. Winners of the August Double Acrostic were [illegible] Massachusetts; David W. Wolcke, Chicago, Illinois; and Lorna Colbert, Belvedere, [illegible]

The Arab Boycott of Israel

Does it give any clues to Arab intentions?

What are the facts?

es to interna-
ind tourism:

l from Arab ports; air-

overfly Arab countries. Israelis or any travelers with Israeli visas in their passports may not enter most Arab countries. The Arab Boycott Office maintains a

How the Boycott works

> The Arab boycott is undisguised economic warfare against the state of Israel. It is totally unrelated to any territorial dispute the Arabs may have with Israel."

at last count included over 6,300 entries

United States alone, over 12,000 firms each year receive requests from Arab firms for boycott compliance. In Europe and Asia, where, in contrast to the United States, boycott compliance is usually legal, the numbers are probably much higher.

The Cost of the Boycott to Israel. The primary damage of the boycott to the Israeli economy is that it prevents or considerably hampers investments in the country. That loss is estimated to be on the order of $500 to $600 million per year. The loss of potential trade with the Arab countries alone is on the order of over $500 million per year. Because of the boycott, Israel's commercial exports are at least 10% less than they would otherwise be—a loss of about $1.2 billion per year!

nst Israel. The boycott is totally
e with Israel, since the boycott
ted just twenty years before any such territories came under Israeli administration.

FLAME

k, said. "Get to the door
The cops were out there hol
their huge guns, scared, trying to
into the store.

Richard had to step in Jim's b
to make the door, could hear so
thing gurgling in Jim's big body.

"Out," Dewey said.

Richard pushed the glass d
open, gun at his neck, hands in
air. "I'm an architect," he called.
an architect."

"I'll shoot him," Dewey said.

"Put it down," the uninjured
said.

"Put yours down," Dewey s
"Yours or I shoot the architect."

Richard could see the cops wer
going to shoot, saw how young
were. Dewey led him around the
They climbed in through the o
side door, Dewey firmly pressing
gun to Richard's temple.

"Go," Dewey said, once Rich
was in the driver's seat. The c
looked helpless. The one wh
been shot slumped against the c
er, a hand pressed to his bleed
shoulder.

Richard backed up slowly into
dark street, backed up so that De
was never exposed. The cops di
move till he put the van in drive
started forward, then he saw th
climb into their car. Dewey s
"Fuck." Money stuck out of his ja
pockets.

Richard said, "Jim . . ."

"'I'm an architect,'" Dewey s
He climbed in back, opened the s
ing door, and before the cops were
enough out of the parking lot to
he leaped from the van and ro
onto someone's lawn. Richard ha
glimpse of him rising and runni
kept driving. The cruiser's lights
gan to flash; in seconds the cops w
close behind. Richard put his h
out the window to show that it
he, the architect, and slowly pu
to a stop in front of a farmhouse.

He climbed from the car, hand
the air, stepped toward the c
They climbed out both sides of t
car, aimed their guns at the beaut
new minivan.

"He jumped out," Richard cal
"He's gone."

"Get over here," the uninjured
said

ichard kept his hands up, took a
le more steps
He's gone?" the cop said.
umped out," Richard said. "He
nto the woods back there."
ou're a lucky man," the shot cop

"Hostage is free," the other cop said, into the radio

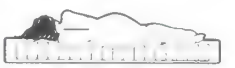
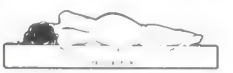
Dewey was caught two months
trying to cash one of the checks
Little Henry's, caught on the
day that Richard passed his architecture exams. In court, just before
istmas, Dewey never looked at
ard once, never said a word to
icate him, confirmed Richard's
, the story Dewey must have read
e newspaper or seen Richard give
V: two thugs, one of them an acintance, had commandeered
ard's van right in his driveway
made him take them to Port
rence at gunpoint. It was a pretty
l story, and no one but Gail ever
tioned it: she knew Richard had
ned some kind of outing with
e drunken fools that night, but
she would never begin to suspect
whole truth, just thought some
king game had got out of hand.
ichard didn't sleep a full night till
g, waited for the lady at the Leslie
ral store to come forward, waited
hat kid Pete to remember that it
Richard who'd announced the cops,
he store lady never peeped, and
in court Pete had called
Richard brave, a hero.

Dewey is serving forty years. Jim
ad. Richard the hero mows
ey's yard when he can, and he
to Dewey's woman (who's not
g what she knows about that
): she's got an okay job now at
turning mill in Wilton. And
ard helps her with her many
's, takes the little boy out fishing,
a bill or two quietly, and thinks
begun to regard him without susn. She's even agreed to let him
porch for her (it's a design he'd
to try out, he says, just a protoof course it's free), agreed to let
clear the lot of car parts and
it and glass. He tells her he owes
he owes Dewey—and it's on
terms she allows him in. ■

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HOW NOW, DRUGGED COW?

Biotechnology comes to rural Vermont

By Tony Hiss



I

dairy farms, which is on-

perhaps a twentieth of

Twenties. In recent years,

year, that is, when the

foreclosure rate on hope-

nearly doubled. But even

if Vermonters are now far more likely to

times ringingly, sometimes apologeti-

For 135 years, a gleaming white stat-

ue has stood atop the gold-leafed dome

of the state capitol in Montpelier. This

serene young woman, who holds a sheaf

with a heavy, no-nonsense diadem of

gives us a sense of where our next meal, and the one after that, will come from.

Farming, as some Vermont dairy producers describe it, is the brilliant notion of going partners with the planet for the benefit of both. The human contribution to this effort has been eighty-hour workweeks over 400 generations, since the first farm animals were tamed and the first seeds planted. To make the job a little easier, each generation has handed down whatever wisdom it has acquired—sometimes about the land and its secrets, sometimes about qualities the work itself can bring out in people, such as patience, forethought, respect, and, for dairy farmers especially, gratitude for all the hard work their cows do. Many Vermonters still live next door to dairy farms or down the road from them; more important, many have been off the farm only a generation or two themselves, unlike urban Americans, such as my neighbors in New York City

are already at least

or four generatio

moved from the

their families

worked.

Vermont's f

dairy farms are

hly celebrated

June on Dairy

bustling, noisy,

spun promotional

that easily could b

taken for the of

state holiday. Th

tivities take place

front lawn of the

in Montpelier a

tract brass bands, jugglers, ble

calves, and big yellow-and-white

tents sheltering informative poste

of cow facts. In hand-lettered,

Magic Marker, one sign tells yo

"the udder takes nutrients out

blood and makes milk." Balloo

sailing up over Agriculture's hea

4,000 bused-in schoolkids c

around claiming free I ♥ MILK st

free SUPPORT FAMILY FARMS st

free cheddar cheese chunks, free B

Jerry's Peace Pops. This year, as th

ways do, celebrants stopped to a

a reproduction of "Foster Mothe

the Human Race," a reverential p

ing of five massive, dignified co

a green, green field.

But this year, among all the b

and displays, there was something

although you had to know whe

look to find it. At a small table set

for several members of Rural Verm

an activist group that speaks for r

f farmers in the state, a woman
ne she had sold fourteen large vel-
posters. BGH, or
netic bovine growth hormone,
, finally became legal and available
out a veterinarian's prescription in
country in February, is the biggest
to hit American dairying since
ial insemination. BGH is a
ch drug made by Monsanto, its
l name is Posilac. To produce the
one, slightly modified cow genes
ted into fermentation tanks con-
ng bacteria, which then spawn a
of the growth hormone that cows
ce naturally. If BGH is injected in-
e rump of a healthy lactating cow,
ng can increase her milk supply by
here from 2 to 25 percent. Posilac
deral approval from the Food and
Administration and qualified en-
ments from the National Insti-
of Health and the American
cal Association. (*See sidebar.*)
GH milk looks and tastes exactly
ar, as non-BGH milk. But many
stores around the country are, at
for now, trying to avoid selling
including all 7-Eleven stores, all
mark and ShopRite supermar-
and all Kroger supermarkets, the
st American chain. Ben & Jerry's
mother large milk buyer, Stony-
Farm Yogurt, in New Hampshire,
aying their farmers several hun-
thousand dollars extra in ex-
ge for written pledges to stay away
BGH until February 1995.
he fact that someone is "doing
thing" to milk is clearly a deeply
ional issue. Even people who try to
l fat and cholesterol feel protec-
about milk, because of its whole-
ness and because children drink
grow strong. Perhaps we can't help
ng such feelings ... as mammals we
have a built-in reverence for milk.
e month that BGH was approved
blic consumption, milk sales across
ountry dropped dramatically. Night
r night on the network news, peo-
identified as "concerned customer"
mer milk buyer" complained that
't natural" and "I don't know what
, but I don't want it in my kids'
." Newspapers reported that BGH
indeed make cows sick. "Cows"
s were more likely to become in-
d," a *Newsday* item noted. (The
story went on to say that "farmers

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[illegible]

L

...ill the most ...ed state, to try to answer some per... ...ife safety of ... observe what ... line is intro... duced into a dairy-farming culture. BGH still makes headlines in Vermont, because Vermont is one of only four states that now have labeling ...s on the books. If the Vermont law ever takes full effect—the state was almost immediately sued by a ... al dairy group—any BGH milk ... Vermont would have to be labeled ... The FDA has refused to require ... labeling, arguing that BGH m... BGH-free milk are practically ... cal and can't be distinguished ... the laboratory. Monsanto ma... ge... kind of Surgeon General's reass... ... on every labeled milk carton, ... plicit reminder that the FDA b...

BGH: THE DEBATE GOES ON

A ... one treated with synthetic bovine growth ... free. A bill currently before Congress would require labels on all milk, butter, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream sold in the country. But until it, or something like it, becomes law, ... ing or drinking. Right now, nearly all of ... sin is likely to be BGH-free or close to it. Dairy farmers in California, Texas, and Florida have generally been more enthusiastic about BGH.

... treated with BGH were brought to light through the efforts of Dr. Marla Lyng, a Chilean-born veterinarian at the Univer... ... dozen Holstein cows that had undergone BGH testing in a clinical trial sponsored by Monsanto, the manufacturer of Posilac, a synthetic growth hormone. (The Monsanto study used a form of BGH that differs ... representatives from Rural Vermont, a family-farm advocacy group, Lyng said that many of the cows she looked at had open wounds around their hocks (the hock, or heel, is located about halfway up the hind leg). Many cows also had mastitis, an udder infection that produces great quantities of pus, which can get into the milk.

Rural Vermont prepared a report, based on Lyng's data and on computerized health ... state. "While definitive conclusions can ... rate health hazard for dairy animals, there ... foot ... BGH cows. The BGH cows also experienced more than twice the rate of uterine infections, and three or four times the rate of ketosis and retained placentas. Cows with ketosis go off feed, milk production falls, and their milk gives off an odd, acidy-sweet smell. Retained placentas, or afterbirths, frequently get infected and, like other uterine infections, are routinely treated with antibiotics, which can be passed on to humans. Hoof rot is also commonly treated with antibiotics, as are some foot and leg injuries.

"Given the increased use of antibiotics," the Rural Vermont report concludes, the BGH test "raises questions not only of animal safety but of human health as well." Although all milk sold in the United States is tested for antibiotic residues, routine testing looks for the presence of only four drugs, all of them from the penicillin family. A 1989 *Wall Street Journal* survey found antibiotic residues in nineteen of fifty milk samples that testers bought in ten cities. Unnecessary doses of antibiotics in humans can bring on allergic reactions or increase resistance, making the drugs less effective. The Centers for Disease Control call antibiotic resistance "a major public health crisis."

Monsanto vigorously disputes the validity of the Rural Vermont report. Company dairy research director Bob Collier argues that the herd in the University of Vermont trial was too small to justify the broad conclusions contained in the report. Collier also says that any higher incidence of infections in test cows is "related to the increase in milk yield, not to [BGH] use."

The Rural Vermont report was front-page news throughout Vermont, although it failed to get picked up by most of the national press. But Dr. David S. Kronfeld, a BGH expert and professor of veterinary medicine at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, believes Monsanto unwittingly vindicated the Rural Vermont findings this year when it printed an insert that is distributed ... Posilac packages. The insert details ... teen potential side effects on cow he... that have been associated with the d... Six of these were revealed to the pu... in the Rural Vermont study.

After the report appeared, the FDA s... a letter discussing the Monsanto trial ... Representative Bernie Sanders of Verm... According to the letter, Posilac had b... administered to a herd of Jerseys a year ... fore the Holstein trials began. The st... found that 43 percent of the Jerseys ... tracted mastitis that required treatm... four times the rate of treatment among ... trol cows. And when the BGH cows ... sick, they stayed sick far longer—8.9 ... on average, whereas the control cows w... mastitis were sick for only a day and a h... (Monsanto maintains that the herd ... fered an abnormally high incidence of m... titis *before* the trial began.)

BGH doesn't cause mastitis direc... but it brings on conditions that may ca... the condition. The drug acts on a cow ... turning back her hormonal clock to ... first months of a milk cycle. At that sta... cows just can't eat enough food; they're ... der such hormonal pressure to make m... that they have to draw on their own bo... tissues. Prolonging this stressed state ma... them far more vulnerable to infectio... "We now know that overall clinical m... titis, which requires antibiotic treatme... is up by almost 80 percent in BST [BG... cows," Kronfeld said.

The Clinton Administration h... shown little enthusiasm for regulati... BGH or examining its safety record. ... federal study released in January argu... that American leadership in biotechn... ogy "would be enhanced by proceedi... with [BGH], and would be impeded ... there were new Government obstacles ... such bio-tech products."

—T.

BGH. No other product has ever ried that kind of endorsement; a on of cider with preservatives, for mple, says so without adding that government considers the preserves harmless.

But the BGH saga turns out to be of a much larger story—the story hy many Americans no longer asate food with farming. City dwellers erally give little thought to the efthat a new high-tech breakthrough, as BGH, will have on farmers or ir animals. It's different in Vermont, ate whose residents are still close to land. Non-farmers I talked to in ns like Peacham, Lyndonville, and net were as worried for dairy proers as they were for themselves. d they're not just nervous about the of the land. They wonder whether farm kids they know, who would be eighth or ninth generation to tend land in northern Vermont, will evave the opportunity to do so. And y fear that the great enterprise of ning—the values it instills and the tunity it once promised—may itbe at risk.

When it comes to BGH, most Vermonters don't see how it could benefit d or farming. Three quarters of the e's citizens don't want BGH in their k, according to a poll published last ter. Vermonters sense that their dairy ners, most of whom are barely scrapby, can't afford to take on anything t would make life even harder. Milk rproduction has already claimed a astating toll here. It requires some seis squinting to re-create the old picpostcard views that I remember so l from the Forties and Fifties, when ent summers in Peacham views I t looking for as I drove around the e. The hills are still there, and the h, white steeples, and the big, red s. But unlike fifty years ago—or n fifteen years ago—many of the s have rusting roofs and haven't a fresh coat of paint for years.

The anxiety that Vermonters feel ves, ironically, from the fact that ry year American cows produce ally more milk—roughly 3 percent e—than everyone can drink; the s market is saturated and shows an lastic demand," as economists say. iness won't improve dramatically, ite huge promotional budgets spent by dairy institutes to get people to drink more milk (the latest ad campaign, part of a $70 million blitz to increase demand, features "got MILK?" stickers on cereal boxes). If the use of BGH puts more milk on the market, and if at the same time BGH also frightens enough people away from milk, then the price dairy farmers would command could dip low enough to drive hundreds more Vermonters out of business.

On the other hand, the number of active milk farms in Vermont could well double over the next ten years if the price farmers get for their milk were allowed to increase by as little as 15 percent. (And there would be no shortage of Vermonters eager to get back into dairy farming at the first hint of profitability.) The supermarket price of milk has been rising quite noticeably in the last few years, from 57 cents per quart six years ago to about 69 cents today, while the price that farmers themselves command has remained constant at about 30 cents. Nothing on the carton tells consumers that the costs of making milk—including taxes, a new tractor, the grain cows eat—are so high that most Vermont farmers lose about a nickel on every quart of milk they produce. A 15 percent raise for farmers would translate into a nickel a quart, a breakeven point that would be met by those who are in the business for the way of life it offers.

Farming in this country has changed so thoroughly over the past four decades that even concerned Vermonters can be as ignorant as big-city kids when it comes to knowing how farms really work. For one thing, food seems cheaper than it actually is. Most people, if they kept their supermarket receipts, would probably find that they spend about 15 percent of their income on food. But for every dollar spent at the grocery store, we send along a second payment of roughly 30 cents to the government in income taxes—money that gets spent on food wastes, food subsidies, and the hidden costs of energy. Wastes include massive soil erosion and the poisoning of wells, aquifers, rivers, and estuaries by fertilizers and pesticides; subsidies include direct payments to farmers and research on new farming methods. Hidden energy costs are the ones we don't auto-

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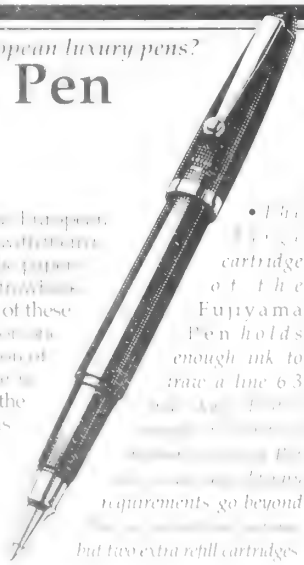
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matically associate with energy, ...constructing wider highways b... farmers grow lettuce in Californ... then truck it to New York, or trai... the injuries that happen when I tu... trucks halfway to New York hav... cidents. About half a cent in ea... tra payment is actually harmf... Vermont dairy farmers: it pays fo... eral irrigation projects in the We... that cows can be raised in the ... and semi-deserts of California and ... Mexico just as easily—and even ... cheaply—than in the cool, damp, ... meadows of Vermont and Wisc... So we wind up spending, on av... about a fifth of our inc... on food.

The transformation in far... following World War II was fuelled ... ly by scientific understanding and ... ly by oil and gas. Human inge... created hybrid plants that grew ... vigorously and abundantly than ... before and built farm machines ... seemed stronger than nature itse... small engine filled with a gallon of ... line can do as much work as a p... can perform in 120 hours (three w... collar workweeks, or one and a ... farming workweeks). Suddenly, ... gas and oil-based fertilizers, oil-b... herbicides and pesticides, and oil-b... machines, farmers could do things ... had previously been too ambitious ... to wish for—tripling the national ... vest, for instance, over a perio... only thirty years.

Much of this postwar fruitfulnes... gone straight into cows. With ... stomachs apiece, cows are among ... few animals that can convert the ... lulose in grass or hay into meat ... milk, but they can be fattened up ... quickly with grain: cows now ea... percent of all the grain grown in A... ica. Cows have to be fed three po... of grain before they can make a p... milk, and six to nine pounds of grai... a pound of beef. (Other animals ... cluding pigs, chickens, catfish, ... iguanas, do a far better job of conv... ing grain into meat.) Raising ... grain to feed more cows has give... the meaty, fatty postwar diet we c... (and worry about). Overall, this ... probably makes life harder for d... farmers by rendering the market ... their product all the more inela...

lons of Americans have cut down
ilk and eggs, which aren't sinful-
gh in fat, so that they can go on
g plenty of red meat, which is (In
y, this new diet is a kind of pre-
aged oil-based imitation of the di-
r pre-agricultural hunter-gatherer
stors ate 10,000 years ago—ex-
that because the not-yet-farmers
heir meat raw, they got all the ben-
from certain amino acids and vi-
ns that get cooked out of our
.)

he mechanization of farming has
changed the dairy cow biologi-
and altered the circumstances of
ife. Most of the changes can be
d to what farmers call "breeding
feeding": the same cows who now
corn instead of grass also have
fully selected fathers. Two gener-
ns ago, when artificial insemina-
made it possible to breed any bull
ny cow in the country, the tech-
gy was eagerly adopted by many
nont farmers. Today, 10 percent of
emaining dairy farms in the state
breeding stock and make their
ey selling mail-order, liquid ni-
en–cooled semen. By emphasiz-
genes and grain, American dairy
ers have been raising cows that,
verage, increase their milk pro-
ion 1 or 2 percent every year. And
ng this time, many dairy farmers
their suppliers have at least un-
ciously started to regard cows as
more than milk machines on
"Let's face it," Bob Collier, Mon-
's dairy research director, told a
rter, "a dairy cow is, metaboli-
cally, an appendage to the
mammary gland."

On Dairy Day in Montpelier, I
erved half a dozen fourth-graders
anced by Beauty, a gangly, dap-
Holstein calf with a white blaze on
ck forehead, all legs and soft dark
and long lashes, curled up in a
under a maple tree—a contented
if ever I saw one. The kids stuck
hands through a fence to pat
ty. "Jamie!" called a shocked,
led girl to her best friend. "This
is licking me!" A sign next to
ty said that a black-and-white
tein, now the predominant dairy
wn North America, can weigh from
0 to 1,700 pounds and make 3,000

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gallons of milk a year, and th
breed was brought to this countr
Holland and Germany at the beg
ning of the Civil War.

What the sign didn't say was h
once grown, Beauty may rarely
outside her pen. Modern "confin
methods" require keeping cows in
instead of letting them out into p
tures; roaming around, it is bel
uses up energy that could go t
making milk. Like other Amer
cows eat a rich diet: in additi
grain, it includes soy beans, silag
haylage. (Some cows also get
tein supplement made from rend
cow carcasses, turning these veg
ans into cannibals of sorts.) And
the cows, foragers by nature, ha
come sedentary, it's up to the f
to take on the extra task of br
food to the cows instead of t
them out to graze. Once they're
fined and stuffed with grain, th
swell up with even more milk
way Strasbourg geese do when fo
to produce pâté de foie gras—l
some dairy farmers to milk then
times a day instead of just twice

Most American farmers have t
stay afloat by expanding their
nesses. Every time they do som
they have to spend more for
switching to grain or buying a ne
tor, they try to pay down the ne
by adding on a few more cows.
wind up doing more work for m
imals while having much less tim
each cow in their care; this enfor
glect may in part explain why
don't last long anymore. Twenty
ago, a farmer was likely to sell o
of his cows when they got to be
twelve years old, while holding
few favorites who might live to b
teen. Today, if a cow's milk prod
falls off at age six or so, she is ap
culled from the herd, or "be
(which means exactly what it s

According to rural sociologist
er kinds of connectedness inher
dairy-farm life also are fading: t
the "technology treadmill," f
stance. Since there is only so
milk money to go around, whe
technology comes along, some f
("early adopters") take to it e
hoping that for a while they'll d
tle better than their neighbor
"late adopters." There's also "bi

n'' a fancy name for the fact nowadays the only survivors are big farms and the very small farms ne latter case, the husband or wife s a second job, off the farm). It's ndsize family farms, the ones that or a rural community, that are dy- ut. Of course, "big" is a word that s to larger and larger numbers. ng the 1940s, a good-sized Ver- dairy farm had about thirty cows, rought in enough money to feed clothe a large family and send one o children to college. Today, a Vermont dairy farm has from 300 0 cows, and parents can send chil- to college only by adding on more

A big California dairy farm, on other hand, can have 5,000 cows. ne northern Vermont farmers I e to were more expressive than ciologists—not surprisingly, since is an eloquent landscape. One an I met, Mary Jane Choate, who hty was a nurse in the Bronx be- she married a Barnet dairy farmer 944. "The first thing I noticed h I came up here," she said, "was ured all the men looked. Little by , it's gotten even harder. We've ed a critical time, and I'm afraid losing a class of people it takes a time to train.

ome things diminish because no ever thought them through," she inued. "I remember the first day harles plowed a field with a trac- nstead of with horses, he came e and said, 'I can't hear the birds nymore.' Other things fade when le move away and aren't there to n them—the pockets of intimacy always counted on—the local ol, which used to be within walk istance; our church, which only a third of the people here go to ore; the general store, which is largely a convenience store."

nley Christiansen of East Mont r was well-known for many years ng Vermont farmers as one who med technology—and he still he newspaper clippings to prove Christiansen, reported the *Vermont y News* on September 21, 1969, d as one of the most progressive fficient farmers in Washington ty, is typical of today's working l of dairyman. Keen-eyed, a slen- an of medium height, soft-spoken and well versed," he "obviously love his animals and his farm." Christiansen, who is now seventy-six and only just retired, showed me his scrapbook while we drank milk and ate vanilla ice cream in his kitchen. The reporter's description still fits—except that Christiansen, who has been welcoming innovations since he saw a fast-hitch tractor at the 1939 World's Fair in New York (before that you could spend half a day attaching a wagon to a tractor), now feels he spent a lifetime cutting his own throat.

Because he's a thoughtful, considerate man, Christiansen throws jokes into the conversation in order not to upset his listeners as he talks about the slow extinction of his hopes. When he started to describe how "these days it seems it's nothing but farmer pitted against farmer, with everyone racing against his closest neighbor or his closest friend to see who can put out milk the cheapest," he paused and asked me if I'd heard the one about the farmers' firing squad ("They form a circle"). Later, he got to telling me that he could no longer advise young people to take up dairy farming: "Vermont abolished slavery in 1777, the first state to do so. But now the youngsters have to work harder than the worst factory jobs that came along after the slave-owning days. More and more I run into older people who are getting out of farming. Some of them retire and move to Florida. Some look like they're still in farming, because bigger farms rent their fields and pastures. One man I know now runs a feed store; another builds railroad cars for a living. Others are still hanging on, eating up their equity. You know, they say that a doctor, a lawyer, and a farmer each won a million dollars in the lottery. The doctor said he'd take a long trip, the lawyer said he was going to diversify his portfolio, and the farmer said, 'Well, I guess I'll keep on farming until the money's all used up.'"

Jenny Nelson, of Ryegate Corner, a co-chairperson of Rural Vermont, has not abandoned hope. If her twenty-year-old son, Grant, someday takes over Home Acres, the family dairy farm, he'll be the eighth-generation Nelson to care for the same piece of land.

"I've met Wisconsin farmers who talk as if three generations on the land

continued on page 58

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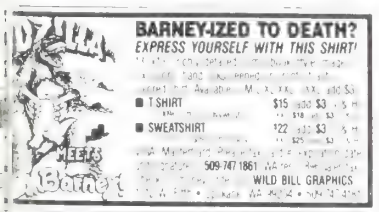
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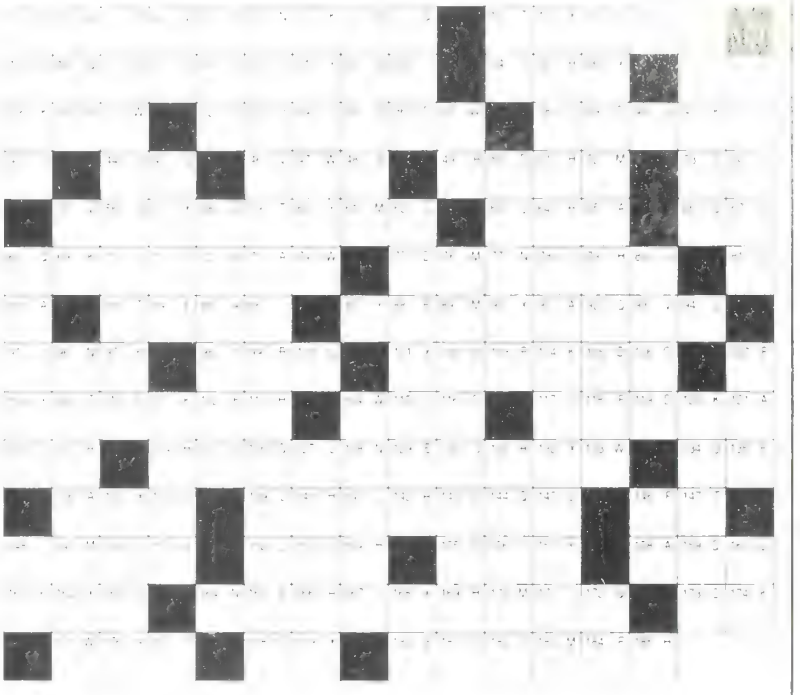
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October Index Sources: 1 Human Rights Watch (Washington); 2 U.S. Holocaust Research [illegible]; 3 [illegible]; 4, 5 [illegible]; 6 [illegible]; 7 [illegible]; 8 [illegible]; 9 Office of Senator Robert Dole (Topeka, Kans.); 10,11 Alan Guttmacher Institute; 12 [illegible]; 13 Keep Sta[illegible] Worldwide (N.Y.C.); 14 UNICEF (N.Y.C.); 15 World Resources Institute; 16 Rural Vermont (Montpelier); 17 Monsanto (St. Louis); 18 [illegible]; 19 [illegible]; 20 *Time*-CNN poll (N.Y.C.); 21 [illegible]; 22, 23 [illegible]; 24, 25 [illegible]; 26 U.S. Federal Election Commission; 27 Morris [illegible] Inc. (Charlotte, N.C.); 28 Ulster County Sheriff's Department (Kingston, N.Y.); 29 [illegible]; 30 [illegible]; 31 [illegible]; 32 [illegible]; 33 [illegible]; 34 Klingon Language Institute (Flourtown, Pa.); [illegible]; [illegible] Los Angeles);

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 142

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the words. The words form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 77.



A. Dispirited

B. "The devil damn thee black, thou [illegible] Macbeth, thy [illegible] Timber with [illegible] the western U.S.

D. Nutritive

E. Charge, fire, [illegible]

F. Utter, worry

G. Surpasses in execution or performance

H. Mixture of sand, loam, etc., [illegible] as a building material

I. Snacked, ate between meals

Build, construct; [illegible]

Forbidden [illegible] (hyph.)

L. Open; free of regret or embarrassment

M. [illegible] rough, drastic, extreme

N. [illegible] France

O. Overwhelm with surprise or wonder

P. [illegible] distant

Q. [illegible]

R. Defeat, subjugate

S. [illegible] A [illegible]

T. God "hath regarded [illegible]"

U. Manipulative therapist

V. [illegible]

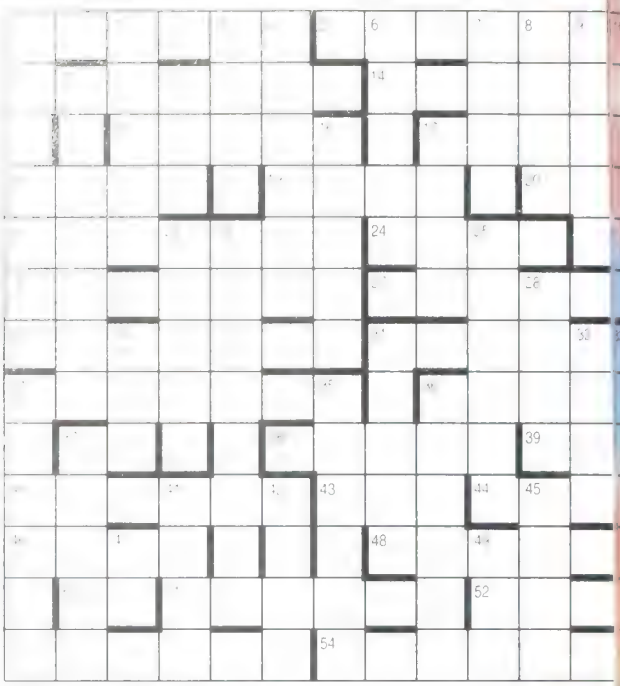
W. Wraithlike, spectral

X. [illegible] refuge, and [illegible] are the everlasting [illegible]

Y. [illegible]

				42				
15	99	1	88	16	135	56		
	12							
					138	100		
31	124	185	13		74			
182	171	148	156					
	4							
	161	174	104	120	111	41	69	
	84		127	38				

PUZZLE



Clue answers include seven capitalized words, one

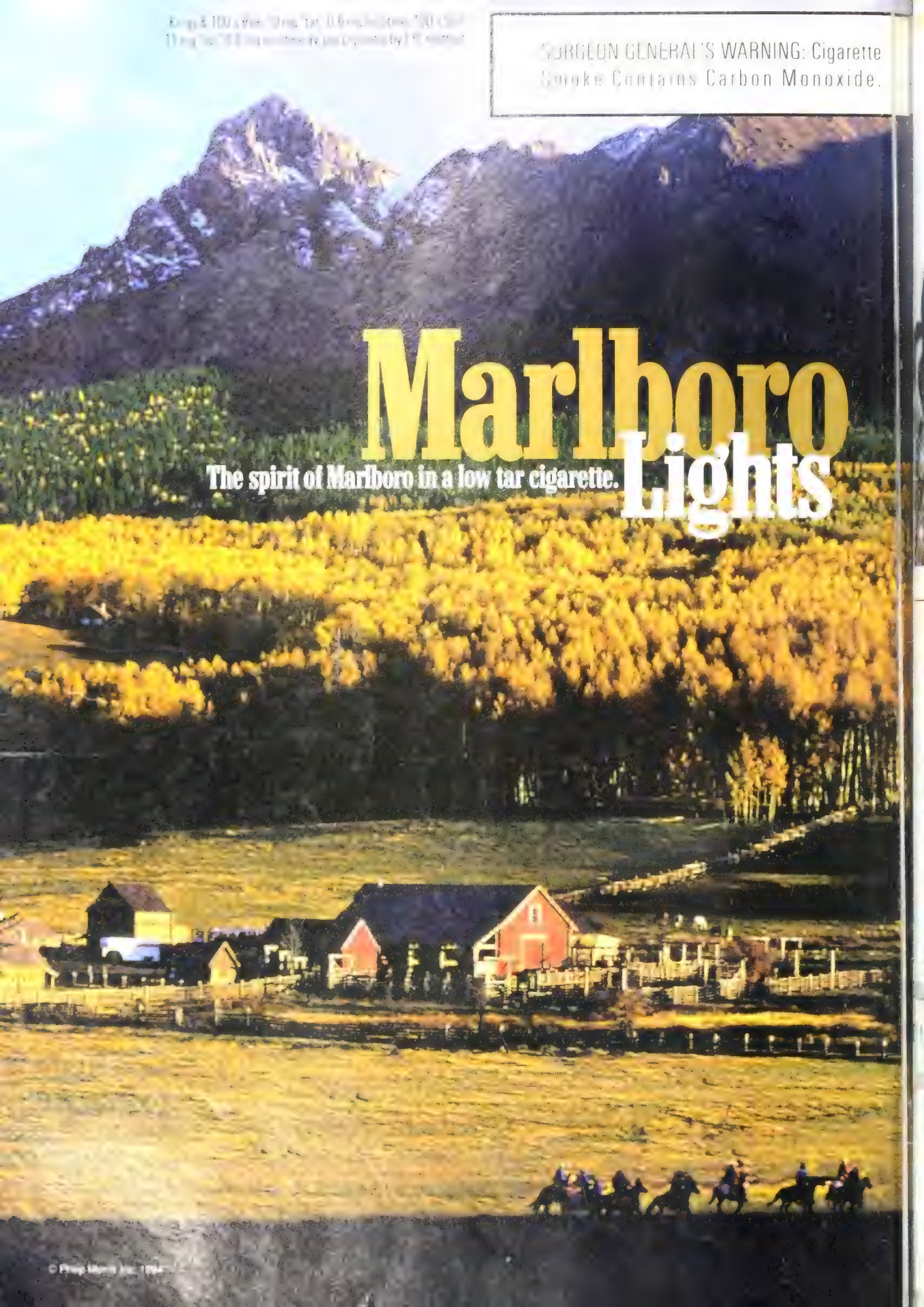
5 Sharp-edged weapon could make her bald (7)

19 Play down double ring rejection (8, *hyph.*)

1 Arrest in NFA coach for the NFA coach (4)
4 Hen up on weathercock? It's nothing much (7)
[illegible] (6)
[illegible] (5)
[illegible] steed (5)
9 Apple users fiddled with format finally (6)
[illegible] (6)
12 A girl ran off with moccasin (8)
13 Mother keeps her screaming at large to intimidate (6, *hyph.*)
16 [illegible] was daydreaming (6)
18 In a hurry, Catholic to skip church work (8, *hyph.*)
[illegible] Cream ale's extreme kind of Bud . . . (5)
[illegible] . . . lighten it—I'm upset over receipts (8)
[illegible] Notices salt reduced first in making dinner courses (6)
[illegible] Baladava, lavaliere, stocking, skirt (8)
[illegible] Simpleton loves blunder (6, *hyph.*)
31 [illegible] (6)
32 [illegible] Max Max (4)
[illegible] Mugs holding petite panties (7, *hyph.*)
[illegible] Sot's first to swig paint, bit by bit (7)
[illegible] Refuse to take a shine to clergyman out of work (7)
[illegible] Give information about tavern's going wrong (7)
[illegible] (10, *hyph.*)
[illegible] (9)
42 Fretful has boy in love? Quite the opposite! (4)
[illegible] Nobleman, losing head, flipped over Mrs. Charles (4)
47 [illegible] (4, *hyph.*)
[illegible] Harrah's curiously full of enthusiasm (6, *hyph.*)

[illegible] New Hampshire, and Thelma Schlesener, Annandale, Virginia.


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By Peter Schrag

NOTHING VENTURED
A Bold Leap into the Ontological Void
By Jim Holt

KING OF THE SKY
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HARPER'S

LETTERS

Politics in the Archives

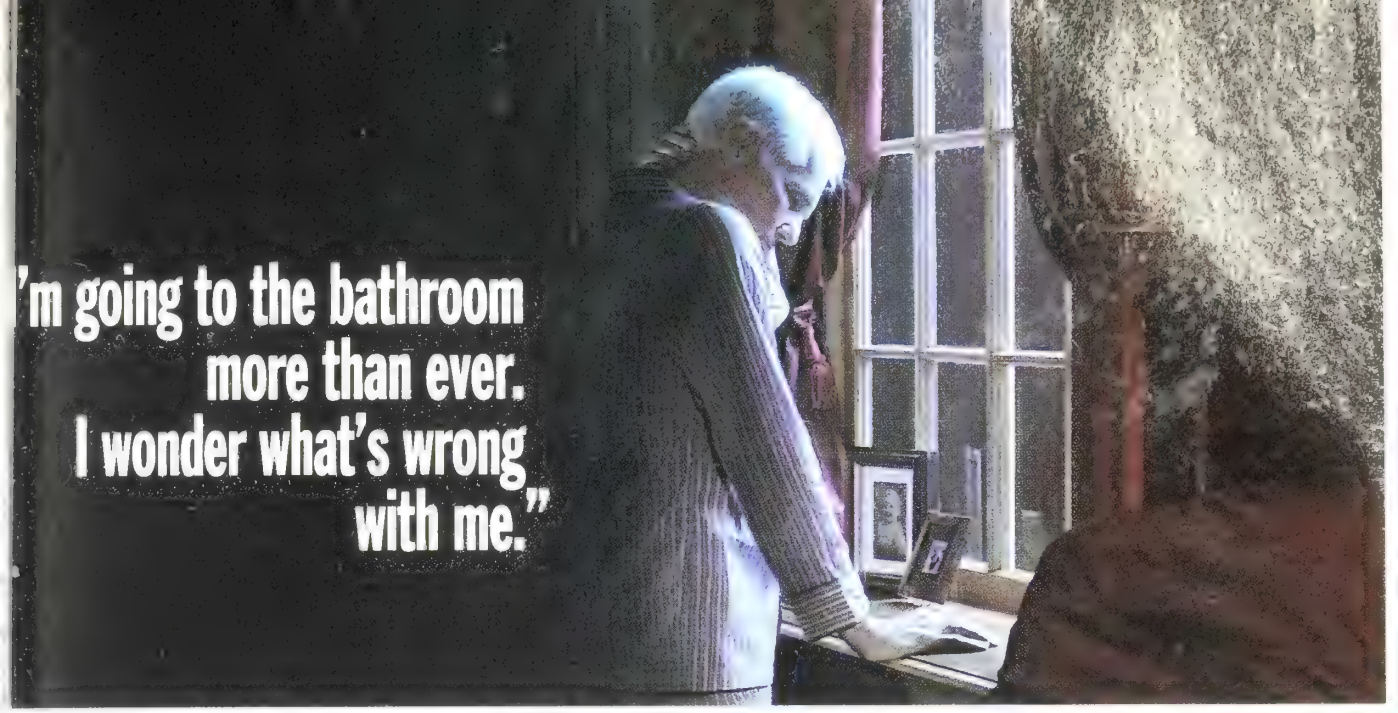
Jack Hitt's well-researched report on the long-delayed release of the Watergate tapes ["Nixon's Last Trump," [illegible] raises critical issues—especially for me, a former Nixon Project archivist. Hitt, it may be recalled, reviews the tendentious relationship between the National Archives, which is required by statute to make public the full truth about abuses of power during Watergate, and Nixon's attorneys, who have successfully blocked the release of certain Nixon administration materials held by the [illegible].

Although individual archives managers, such as assistant archivist for presidential libraries John Fawcett, cannot escape criticism for their failure to release historical materials, responsibility for the agency's plight goes beyond the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Despite a uniquely nonpartisan mission, NARA is dependent on powerful governmental bodies—some with possible conflicts of interest—for assistance and oversight. The Justice Department, for example, met with Nixon's lawyers in 1985 to discuss "favorable" releases of information, and in 1986 attempted to have NARA "abdicate its legislated responsibility" [illegible] executive privilege. Is Justice now willing [illegible] legal onslaughts by attorneys for Nixon? If not, archivists have n[illegible] to turn.

Why did NARA come u[illegible] sault by Nixon representativ[illegible] prepared materials for releas[illegible] could say that Nixon was tryin[illegible] ert control over the historical r[illegible] as indicated by the claims [illegible] lawyers made in 1987 when th[illegible] objections to more than 150,00[illegible] the archives had recently deem[illegible] leasable. The lawyers said m[illegible] this material covered Watergat[illegible] careful examination of publi[illegible] mation may indicate otherw[illegible] example, comparison of H. R. [illegible] man's diary and memoirs to th[illegible] drawal record of Nixon's cla[illegible] meeting notes (the same no[illegible] which Haldeman based his dia[illegible] gests that Nixon asked the a[illegible] for a deletion of notes from A[illegible] 1973. This deletion may corres[illegible] a diary entry describing Nixo[illegible] of funds, held by Bebe Reb[illegible] Haldeman for Watergate exper[illegible] one would deny Nixon's cla[illegible] garding genuinely personal ite[illegible] the actions of his lawyers rais[illegible] bling questions about his pres[illegible] more deletions of tapes and [illegible] ments. And, as Hitt points ou[illegible] actions may explain why NA[illegible] not fulfilled its mandate.

That NARA was given a m[illegible] requiring it to act independent[illegible] was undermined by pressure fr[illegible] private and public sector, shows W[illegible] ington at its most destruct[illegible] statutes and oversight mean s[illegible] small wonder that post-Water[illegible] forms have proven illusory.

Mamdi Kansteiner
Arlington, Va.



Your urinary symptoms may be caused by a condition called benign prostate enlargement or BPH. BPH is not cancer and does not lead to cancer, although the two conditions can exist at the same time. Remember, only a doctor can evaluate your symptoms and their possible causes.

his you?	Yes	No
you get up more than once or twice a night to urinate?		
you often have sudden, uncontrollable urges to urinate?		
you have a hesitant or slow urine stream?		
ou have a frequent need to urinate?		

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[illegible] urge [illegible]

ng by a factor of two every two
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igh natural background radiation
radioactivity in the exclusion ar-
s—areas where people are not al-
d to live—is disappearing faster
the thirty-year half-life of Ce-
137, sinking into the ground
re the absorption of radiation
es it less dangerous.

Weisman's statement that earlier
er predictions are far exceeded is
wrong. Last July, a dozen promi-
t Russian, Belarussian, and
ainian experts gave talks at the
ith Physics Society meeting in
Francisco. Dr. Eugene Ivanov of
sk, with the help of the World
ith Organization, now has the first
leukemia registry in Belarus.
kemia rates have not risen in Be-
or Ukraine. Earlier reports [cit-
increases] were incorrect due to
liable reporting of cases before
6. The only type of cancer for
ch there has yet been an increase
e rare thyroid cancer among chil-
n, reported in 1991 in southwest-
Belarus. About fifty cases (maybe
en fatalities) per year can be at-
ted to Chernobyl.

nusually intense levels of fear and
s were experienced after Cher-
yl because of distrust and misin-
nation. Now that we are friends
the peoples of Belarus, Russia,
Ukraine, we should help them out
eir nightmare of secrecy and mis-
rmation with objective reporting
he effects of Chernobyl. This will
self improve health by removing
e stress. Fortunately, there is now
igh data to make this possible.

ard Wilson
ard University
bridge, Mass.

Weisman responds

ysicist Richard Wilson has long
ed himself with those scientists
downplay the health effects of
Chernobyl accident. In 1989 he
sed Soviet journalists who chal-
ed the government line on Cher-
l of "being influenced by the
ream tendency toward sensa-
dism." Wilson still sticks to these
s in spite of the steady accumu-
lation of data showing that the long-term consequences of Chernobyl may be far *worse* than predicted.

In Kiev today, doctors cite a growing catalogue of studies to support their observations that rates of cancer and health abnormalities are rising. The most recent study, presented in July by Yukio Sato, a Hiroshima University specialist in radioactivity-caused malformations, found that in regions of Belarus and Ukraine, the rate of birth defects is 6.97 per 1,000 a 1.8-fold increase from normal rates. Sato's research also shows an increase in the number of babies born with more than the usual number of fingers or toes.

Another study released this year, by MIT nuclear engineer Alexander Sich, may help explain the increase in deformities. Sich, who over a period of eighteen months completed the most comprehensive examination to date of Chernobyl's ruins, concluded that, contrary to official reports, the reactor core suffered a complete meltdown, which was only partially buried by efforts to douse the fire. And even though the Soviets eventually admitted that 50 million curies of radiation were released, the true figure, according to Sich, was between 185 and 250 million curies. These findings, contrary to what Richard Wilson asserts, raise new questions about previous predictions of the short- and long-term health consequences of Chernobyl's fallout.

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NOTEBOOK

Gospel singing

By Lewis H. Lapham

After a lost war one should only write comedies.

—Novalis

On C-Span in early September I came across President Bill Clinton addressing the annual meeting of the National Baptist Convention, and as I listened to him preach the lessons of Christian virtue to the black clergymen assembled in New Orleans, I marveled at his conversion to both an evangelist and a Republican. I had known that Washington was a hard town and that it demanded of its principal figures frequent changes of principle and allegiance, but I hadn't thought that the President would so soon abandon his hope of secular government. It wasn't even two years ago that he arrived at the White House in the persona of the bustling social engineer, accompanied by a consortium of policy experts and busy with the blueprints of economic reform, enthusiastic in his belief that a benevolent state could construct one or more of the model utopias designed by the Harvard faculty of political science.

As most of the nation's newspaper columnists have by now been at some pains to point out, nothing has worked quite the way the President had planned. His legislative initiatives fail to inspire Congress; the media scoff at the architectural drawings of Paradise regained; the gardeners want too much money. Discouraged by so many dismal prospects, the engineer apparently prefers to trade his slide rule for a missionary robe, and so here he was in New Orleans blaming the bankruptcy of the project on the character of the American people—on their cynicism and unwillingness to accept "personal responsibility," on their drifting away from the old Puritan faith in [illegible] and thrift and hard work and chastity and staying out of jail. Although his own marks for deportment under some of these headings haven't always been exemplary (a fairly common failing among television evangelists and one that his audience was accustomed to forgive), the President managed to sound not only like Jimmy Carter scourging his fellow citizens for the sin of "malaise" but also like Dan Quayle promoting the safe and happy return to the land of "family values," where all the boys and girls behind the white-picket fences look just the way they looked when they graduated from the same high school in Muncie, Indiana, in 1958. The President declared himself firmly opposed to sexual permissiveness, to the divorce rate, to the births of too many illegitimate children, to the routine killing in the streets. "Every time you look at the evening news," he said, "there's another funeral. And there's a disproportionate number of black kids lying in those pine boxes, too. And that's wrong, that's what's really wrong . . ."

The congregation applauded the sympathy and noble sentiment, but the President was unlucky with the next morning's arrangement of the news. On the same day that he conducted his Bible class in New Orleans, the district attorney's office in Los Angeles announced its decision not to seek the death penalty in the O. J. Simpson trial. Presumably having concluded that no jury in Los Angeles County, or probably anywhere else in the country, would, under any circumstances, order Simpson's execution, the district attorney in effect conceded that neither the moral nor the civil law means much of anything when pitted against the heavier artillery of wealth, celebrity, and the fear of tomorrow's race riot. The two dispatches —one from the pulpit, the other from the shop floor of the criminal-justice system—appeared in a number of national newspapers in adjacent columns on the same page. Reading them as variant texts on the promise of American democracy (a government of laws, not men), I could well understand why a politician would prefer the ornamental language of religion to the vernacular of the streets. Who would want to argue the point that maybe we live in a society where a sufficient force of publicity and $5 million in legal fees buy the privilege of cutting off a woman's head?

During the autumn political campaigns most of the candidates standing for election this month followed the trail through the wilderness marked out by President Clinton and Dan Quayle. Except in Virginia, where the two prospective senators accused each other of treason or adultery, the would-be tribunes of the people clothed their remarks in the idiom of uplifting moralism. Most of what was wrong with the United States they attributed to the "ethical chaos" within the lower ranks of the society, and they noticed that cynicism was a condition (like rickets or malnutrition) almost invariably associated with the poor.

This latter assumption strikes me as one of the better jokes of an age that flatters itself on the refinement of its postmodern disillusion, but it accounts for the increasingly bland character of a political debate conducted by people who award themselves the world's some virtues of high-school athletic directors. When speaking in public—to Ted Koppel on *Nightline*, to the readers of *The New Republic*, to the [illegible] guests invited to a Renaissance weekend—the high-minded classes (tenured professors and magazine editors as well as corporate vice presidents and first-term members of Congress) limit their remarks to the specifications of polite euphemism and prophets of abstraction. Of their own knowledge

ex ience they profess to know little
or thing of murder, ambition, lust,
sel ness, cowardice, or greed. They
les such tasteless subjects to Oprah
or sh Limbaugh, and they talk in-
ste about "issues," "initiatives," and
"p ies," about the general lowering
of country's "moral tone."

when speaking privately among
the selves, the same high-minded
cla s adhere to the dogma that ev-
ery ng is corrupt. At dinner parties
in w York, Washington, and Los
An les, the guests overbid one an-
oth with fabulous tales of fraud and
bet al at the highest levels of art and
gov ment. By so doing they demon-
str not only the delicacy of their
sen ilities but also their close ac-
qua tance with people who count for
som hing in the world, with the prac-
titi ers of realpolitik at the Walt Dis-
ney Company or the State Depart-
men Nothing survives the withering
lite n of their sophistication. Let the
con rsation turn to the loans made by
Citi ink, and a woman who reads *The*
Nat n and keeps an apartment in Paris
tells story about her father-in-law,
who ribed an Arab and plotted with
the ternational Monetary Fund to
redu the Third World to penury; let
the onversation pass on to the
hyp risy of the news media, and a
you man with rosewater in his beard
men ons a well-placed columnist who
sold s scrap of the First Amendment
for ell-timed word of advice about
whe to buy Japanese yen.

F unately for the safety of the re-
pub the virtuous few who compose
the sent company (those of us here
in th room, or this club, or this faculty
mee g) always know themselves to be
inno nt of the crimes they see adver-
tised n the newspapers. Always it is
othe eople who stand in need of cor-
recti —people in a foreign country,
peop belonging to a different race or
genc , people who don't like Woody
Alle novies or didn't go to Yale.

In s address to the Baptists in New
Orle s, the President said that in re-
spec the ordering of our moral im-
pera es, "We still haven't quite got
the n thm right," and over the course
of th ummer I kept running into peo-
ple w thought they knew how to
bring me discipline to the band. Most
of th tended to favor military music
and strict four-quarter time. On three successive afternoons in southern Rhode Island I collected the following set of guidelines:

1. (From a man in a raincoat on a dock in Newport): Public flogging, preferably twice a week and broadcast live on CNN. Every day the criminal-justice system produces an abundant supply of newly convicted felons, and it's a mistake to let the malefactors drop unobtrusively from sight. They constitute a natural resource, "like timber or arable land." Properly exploited, they could furnish the nation's schoolchildren with frightful but instructive homilies.

2. (From a woman on a ferry): Criminals to be placed in stocks in city parks. The country has lost its sense of shame.

3. (From two women in a restaurant): Criminals to be disfigured (their ears lopped off, their foreheads marked with branding irons, etc.) and exhibited to a national television audience during halftime at Sunday football games.

Among the would-be correctors of mankind on Narragansett Bay, I was struck not only by the punitive and sometimes strident tone of their voices but also by the fairly precise correlation between their net worth and the extent of their alarm. The more well-off the witness to the world's corruption, the more earnest his or her concern for the state of the nation's morals. Having listened for an hour to a man in a yachting blazer complain about the decay of the nation's youth, most especially its black youth, I congratulated him on his great awakening and suggested that he might consider placing himself on exhibit in East Los Angeles or downtown Detroit—possibly standing on a flatbed truck and drawn through the streets like a Mardi Gras float or the carnival statue of a Catholic saint, an exemplary figure certain to be greeted with admiration and awe. "The children in those parts," I said, "probably have never seen a yachtsman. They've been deprived of the sight of virtue. You would be doing them a kindness."

The commodore didn't know whether I was in earnest or making some sort of cynical joke. On the one hand the notion seemed a trifle far-fetched, but on the other hand he was a very rich and very important man—*Business Week* had published his photograph, and sometimes in the street teenage girls mistook him for Sean Connery.

Later that evening I regretted my remark, which the commodore fortunately misunderstood, but when several days later I saw President Clinton among the Baptists in New Orleans, I wondered why the White House press office had omitted the procession of chanting monks. What else has he made of his presidency other than the striking of poses meant to represent noble or democratic states of feeling, a symbol moving among symbols, a parade of gestures signifying his earnest and lifelong commitment to truth, liberty, justice, and the flag. President Carter followed a similar course during his last two years in the White House, presenting himself as a mendicant friar, barefoot and without guile, assuring the voters in Winnetka and San Diego that the business of governing the American republic mattered less than the mending of the American soul. On the Republican parade float, I can imagine either Dan Quayle or William Bennett standing side by side with the commodore, waving to the crowd and tossing confetti torn from their books of golden commonplaces.

When politicians complain of man's inhumanity to man, I never know who it is that they mean to convince. Who disagrees with the proposition that murder is wrong? Or, as the President also said to his audience in New Orleans, that "we'd be better off if more people lived in a stable, traditional family like you see on one of those 1950s sitcoms"? The harder questions are political, not moral, questions about why the banking interests welcome a high rate of unemployment, or why the criminal-justice system makes itself amenable only to those citizens rich enough to afford the price of admission.

Politicians changed into evangelists need not answer the harder questions. Instead of building roads or schools, they project images, and if sometimes they feel that they lack the gravitas so much admired by the ancient Romans, that maybe nobody is listening to them or that they've become all but invisible in the public-opinion polls, they can always invade Haiti or Panama. ■


ABSOLUT APPEAL

HARPER'S INDEX

Number of the 16 Democratic senators up for reelection this month whose TV or radio ads mention Bill Clinton

atio of spending on campaign ads by Bill Clinton in 1992 to total spending on all health-care-policy ads this year : ..

Chances that an American knows who Harry and Louise are : 1 in 8

Percentage of Americans who said last year that they favored national health insurance financed by new taxes : 59

Number of the 16 countries with universal health care in which private insurers cover a majority of citizens : 0

Number of months of government-paid leave allowed Swedish parents under a new law passed in June : 12

Chances that a U.S. teenager has not spoken to either parent for more than ten minutes during the last month : 1 in 5

Percentage change, since 1988, in U.S. book sales to white households : –3

Percentage change since then in U.S. book sales to black households : +26

Number of U.S. soldiers certified as fluent in Haitian Creole : 161

ercentage of Americans who think U.S. military forces should be used to "reinstate democratically elected leaders" : 37

Percentage who think U.S. military forces should be used to "protect the interests of U.S. corporations" : 53

Rank of Paris and Hong Kong among cities with the busiest Pizza Hut outlets worldwide : 1,2

Pounds of feed forced down a duck's throat each day in the last month of its life in order to produce foie gras : 6

Total number of photographs of Kate Moss in the September issues of *Vogue*, *Elle*, and *Harper's Bazaar* : 49

umber of diagrams included in the pamphlet accompanying Reality, the "female condom" that went on sale in August : 11

Percentage of Americans who believe that killing a doctor who performs abortions is a "justifiable act" : 3

Percentage of Americans who believe that Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley will be married "forever" : 4

hances that a juvenile-court judge favors lowering to 14 the age at which a child may be tried as an adult for murder : 2 in 5

Leftover campaign funds spent on legal fees by 11 former members of Congress between 1979 and 1993 : $1,409,445

Rank of Oliver North's party affiliation among the reasons Bob Dole says that voters should elect him : 1

Number of congressional races this year in which both major-party candidates are women : 10

Percentage of American women who say their car is "more reliable" than most men they know : 49

Ratio of the number of miles driven by the Japanese to the number of miles they ride on trains each year : 2:1

Ratio of the number of miles driven by Americans to the number they ride on trains : 288:1

Tons of carbon dioxide produced by one U.S. automobile in its lifetime : 42

Average number of U.S. industrial accidents occurring each day that result in the release of hazardous chemicals : 19

Federal emergency funds sent to Los Angeles–area residents after the January earthquake : $1,143,847,218.50

Amount returned to the government since then : $13,000,000

Number of natural disasters worldwide since 1987 that have cost insurers more than $1 billion : 11

Percentage change during 1993 in the inflation rate in Serbia : +363,000,000,000,000,000

Number of new currencies introduced in Brazil in the last ten years : 5

Tons of talonas, Lithuania's temporary currency since 1992, that have been converted into toilet paper this year : 30

Pieces of undelivered mail found in the trunk of a car belonging to a Chicago postman last spring : 3,000

ank of November among months in which Americans receive the largest number of fund-raising appeals in the mail : 1

Number of turkeys the United Parcel Service gives its employees each Thanksgiving : 267,600

Age, in years, of two sweet potatoes on display at the Potato Museum in Albuquerque, New Mexico : 3,794

ercentage of Americans who say they would vote for Dan Quayle over Bill Clinton if the election were held today : 31

Number of licensed Bozos, worldwide : 76

Number who are not Willard Scott : 75

Figures cited are the latest available as of September 1994 unless otherwise noted on page 56.

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R[illegible]ely has [illegible]tting down been so exhilarating.



[illegible] smell of leather. The rich glow of walnut. The way the instruments reach for your hands, and the world lies at your [illegible]. If there's anything that it [illegible] wanted to make the sky flash lightning, there'd probably be a control for that, too.

[illegible] it [illegible] when you Demand Better. 1-800-718-7778.

AURORA
An American Dream

READINGS

[Essay]

NO-FAULT FICTION: BLAME THE PRESIDENTS

From "Dysfunctional Narratives," by Charles Baxter, in the Fall issue of Ploughshares. *Baxter is the author of* Shadow Play, *a novel. His story "Created Things" appeared in the November 1992 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

Lately I've been possessed of a singularly unhappy idea: the greatest influence on American fiction over the last twenty years may have been Richard Nixon—not as a writer but as a public figure. He is the inventor, for our purposes and for our time, of the concept of "deniability." Deniability is the almost complete disavowal of intention in relation to bad consequences. This is a made-up word, and it reeks of the landfill-scented landscape of lawyers and litigation and high school. Following Nixon in influence on recent fiction would be two runners-up, Ronald Reagan and George Bush. Their administrations put the passive voice, politically, on the rhetorical map. In their efforts to acquire deniability in the arms-for-hostages deal with Iran, their administrations managed to achieve considerable notoriety for self-righteousness, public befuddlement about facts, forgetfulness under oath, and constant disavowals of political error and criminality, culminating in that quasi-confessional, passive-voice-mode sentence uttered first by Vice President Bush and then, days later, by President Reagan: "Mistakes were made."

Contrast this with Robert E. Lee's statement after the third day of the battle of Gettysburg. "All this has been my fault," he said. "I asked more of men than should have been asked of them." These sentences have a slightly antique ring. People just don't say such things anymore.

What difference does it make to writers of stories if public figures are denying their responsibility for their own actions? So what if they are, in effect, refusing to tell their own stories accurately? So what if the President of the United States is making himself out to be, of all things, a victim?

Well, to make an obvious point, they create a climate in which social narratives are designed to be deliberately incoherent and misleading. Such narratives humiliate the act of storytelling. You can reconstruct a story if someone says, "I made a mistake" or "We did that," but you can't reconstruct a story—you can't even know what the story is—if everyone is saying, "Mistakes were made." Who made them? Well, everybody made them and no one did, and it's history anyway, so we should forget about it. Every story is a history, however, and when there is no comprehensible story, there is, in some sense, no history, the past, under these circumstances, becomes an unreadable mess. When we hear words like "deniability," we are in the presence of narrative dysfunction, a phrase employed by the poet C. K. Williams to describe the process by which we lose track of the story of ourselves, the story that tells us who we are supposed to be and how we are supposed to act.

Nixon, as the spiritual godfather of the contemporary disavowal movement, set the tenor for the times in his lifelong denial of responsibility for the Watergate break-in and cover-up. He claimed that misjudgments were made, though not necessarily by him; mistakes were made, though they were by no means his own; and the crimes that were committed were crimes only if you defined "crime" in a certain way, if you chose the definition that his enemies preferred. It wasn't the law, he claimed; it was all just politics.

Nixon's approach pervades all the current debates and quarrels about taking responsibility as opposed to being a victim. We aren't sure whether

in real life protagonists still exist or whether we are all, in some sense, minor characters, the objects of terrible forces. Of course, we are often both. But look at *Oprah*. (I have, I do, I can't help it.) For all the variety of the situations, the unwritten scripts are often similar: someone is testifying because he or she has been hurt by someone else. The pain inflicter is invariably present and accounted for onstage, and sometimes this person admits, abashedly, to inflicting the ruin: cheating, leaving, abusing, or murdering. Usually, however, there's no remorse, because some other factor caused it: bad genes, alcoholism, drugs, or—the last resort—Satan. For intellectuals it may be the patriarchy or capitalism or some other abstract devil. In either case, the malefactor may be secretly pleased: he or she is on television and will be famous for fifteen minutes.

The audience's role in all this is to comment on what the story means and to make a judgment about the players. The audience's judgment is required because the dramatis personae are incapable of judging themselves. They generally will not say that they did what they did because they wanted to or because they had decided to. The story is shocking. You hear gasps. But the participants are as baffled and bewildered as everyone else. So we have the spectacle of utterly perplexed villains deprived of their villainy.

Villainy, properly understood, gives someone a largeness, a sense of scale. It seems to me that that sense of scale has abandoned us. What we have instead is not exactly drama and not exactly therapy. It exists in that twilight world between the two, very much of our time, where deniability reigns. No verdict ever comes in. No one is in a position to judge. It makes the mind itch as if from an ideological rash. It is the spectacle, hour after hour, week after week, of dysfunctional narratives, interrupted by commercials.

Since the time of the Greek tragedies, mistakes and crimes have been a source for narratives. Now that we are living in a time of crime without responsibility, we have begun to move away from the fiction of protagonists and antagonists into another mode—the fiction of finger-pointing, the fiction of the quest for blame. When people can't make any narrative sense of their own feelings, readers start to ask writers what they are supposed to feel. Reading begins to be understood as a form of therapy. In such an atmosphere, stories that come with built-in morals are more comforting than stories in which characters are making intelligent or unwitting mistakes.

In such fiction, characters and events are often accused of turning the protagonist into the kind of person the protagonist is, usually an unhappy person. That's the whole story. When blame has



ean National Assembly, Seoul, 2 December," by Yeohong Yoon. This photograph, which originally appeared okmin Ilbo, *a South Korean newspaper, was taken during a confrontation in the South Korean parliament he 1994 budget; it shows opposition members trying to silence Hwang Nakjoo, vice chairman of the Nation-sembly, minutes before the deadline for the budget to pass. The photograph was among the winners of the 1993 d Press Photo of the Year Contest; it was on display last month at the World Financial Center in New York City*

been assigned, the story is over.

Marilynne Robinson, in her essay "Hearing Silence: Western Myth Reconsidered," calls the already moralized story, the therapeutic narrative, part of a "mean little myth" of our time:

> One is born and in passage through childhood suffers some grave harm. Subsequent good fortune is meaningless because of this injury, while subsequent misfortune is highly significant as the consequence of this injury. The work of one's life is to discover and name the harm one has suffered.

As long as this myth is operational, one cannot act, in stories or anywhere else, in a meaningful way. The injury takes for itself all the meaning. All achievements, and all mistakes, are finessed. There is no free will. There is only acting out, the acting out of one's destiny. But acting out is not the same as acting. Acting out is behavior that proceeds according to a predetermined, invisible pattern created by the injury. The injury becomes the unmoved mover, the replacement for the mind's capacity to judge and to decide. One thinks of Nixon here: the obscure wounds, the vindictiveness, the obsession with enemies, the acting out.

I suppose I am nostalgic—as a writer, of course—for stories with mindful villainy, villainy with clear motives that any adult would understand, bad behavior with a sense of *scale*, that would give back to us our imaginative grip on the despicable and the admirable and our capacity to have some opinions about the two. Most of us are interested in characters who willingly give up their innocence and decide to act badly. I myself am fascinated when they not only do that but also admit that they did it and even declare that they had good reasons for doing so. There is such a thing as the poetry of a mistake, and when you say "Mistakes were made," you deprive an action of its meaning and you sound like a weasel. When you say "I fucked up," the action retains its sordid origin, its obscenity, and its poetry. At such moments wrongdoing becomes intelligible, and the story can come to a close.

Dysfunctional narratives lack that ability; there is no polite way for them to end. Richard Nixon, disgraced, resigned, still flashing the V for Victory from the helicopter on the White House lawn, cognitively dissonant to the end, went off to his enforced retirement, where, tirelessly, year after year, in solitude, he wrote his accounts, every one of them meant to justify and to excuse.



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about the existence, nature, or severity of a disditional job offer. This is to ensure that an applijob-related functions.

per day?" or "How much do you weigh?" Such inquiries are not likely to elicit information about a disability because there are a number of reasons why an individual may or may not regularly eat meals or may have a high or low weight. R may not ask questions such as, "Do you intervals throughout the day in order to mainly to elicit information about a disability (e.g.,

R is hiring a word processor and asks an appli- ed. However, R may not go on to ask how extensive the break is, when the arm is expected

R may ask an applicant, "How many Mondays or Fridays were you absent last year on leave other than approved vacation leave?" R may not ask, "How many days were you sick last year?" or "How

[Testimony]

SIGNED, SEALED, DEMENTED

From "Investigation of the Office of the Postmaster," a report issued in July by the Committee on House Administration of the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1991, Capitol police discovered that employees of the House Post Office were embezzling public funds; the former House postmaster, Robert Rota, and Representative Dan Rostenkowski (D., Ill.) were implicated in the ensuing investigation. In the testimony excerpted below, Mary Catherine Braithwait, an employee of the House Post Office, was questioned by [illegible]

HATHAWAY: In your experience at the post office, was any member ever angry? Did you think that was a real possibility?

BRAITHWAIT: I do know that some years ago there was a man working in the mailroom by the name of Phillip Miller, who is the stepson of Congressman Bob Haze. Phillip was known to have very erratic behavior and a very bad temper. He did not work on the early-morning shift, but one morning he came in anyway. He seemed to be very agitated. He took off his shoes and socks and walked around the mailroom. Nobody knew why he was there. He asked someone for a cigarette; they gave it to him. He asked somebody else for a cigarette; they gave it to him. He asked a couple more people for cigarettes; everybody just gave him a cigarette.

He walked toward the back where the offices are. A little while later he came out, and he had a cigarette sticking out of each ear and one out of each nostril. He was pacing back and forth and had a radio on his shoulder. Nobody seemed to know what he was doing. He went to the back again and came out with binder clips attached to his face. I said to Paul Tomasek [Braithwait's supervisor], "You have got to get him out of here." And he said, "I can't do anything about it." I said, "What do you mean you can't do anything about it?" And he said, "Cathy, he has got a House I.D. He can come in here." I said, "I don't think so. I think you should call the police." He said, "No, I can't."

The next night he came in again, and it was the same sort of scenario. It wasn't until late in the morning, when he started taking his clothes off, that people finally decided they had to do something about it. I wasn't there, but I was told that it took six officers to get him into a squad car.

Now, there was some kind of a report written up, and the people who wrote the report were really chastised by Mrs. Haze [Congressman Haze's wife], who told them that Phillip was a diabetic and



Our Squall Jacket. Born and raised in the land of crummy weather.

)on't get us wrong – we wouldn't live anywhere but ere in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. But visitors ask us how we *rvive* the winters. Sometimes, gets so bitterly cold, our local dio station runs frostbite arnings every quarter hour. The point is, when we say the nds' End Squall Jacket can and up to crummy weather, lieve us: we *know* about ummy weather.

How does the Squall do it? First ing is, it has an outer shell of upplex™ nylon, which shrugs off inter blasts.

Happens that the Supplex we se is *3-ply*, not the commoner ply. So, our Squall is a sturdy ugh-skinned bird.

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Warming up to the subject

But what's *outside* our Squall is ly half of it. Inside, we use a toasty-warm lining of Polartec™ 300 fleece.

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A WHISTLE-BLOWER FEELS THE RTC'S LONG ARM

I

partment to the Contracts Department had all the

In the ensuing months, I continued to come into possession of additional information and documents that led me to believe that Control Associates was engaged in fraud, waste, and abuse on many fronts in the performance of RTC contracts. In August 1992, I approached the ethics officer for the RTC's North East Consolidated Office, disclosed all information in my possession concerning Control Associates, and requested that an audit be performed of all eleven contracts it held with the RTC. I also contacted the hot line of the RTC's inspector general to report the activities of Control Associates. (In February 1994, the inspector general's office issued a report confirming my allegations that Control Associates had violated government contracting regulations and guidelines.)

Since I had utilized the in-house chain of command to report the activities of Control Associates, it was known in my office that I had blown the whistle on the activities of a favored contractor regularly employed by my office. Beginning shortly after I made my first disclosure, I was subjected to numerous reprisals. These actions continued to escalate and eventually led, in May 1993, to my termination from the RTC.

Incredibly, the day following my termination, the RTC had private investigators assigned to follow me. While running errands in my home neighborhood, I noticed that I was being followed by two men in a blue automobile. I reported this incident to my local police department. Shortly thereafter, the two men appeared at the police station. According to the police report,

> They related that they work for RTC and are as-
>
> The only information and instructions they have is that Dunn may try to disrupt a meeting somewhere north of here, that if he travels north they are to fol-
>
> Dunn will continue thru Friday.

The police department in my hometown viewed "this whole incident as bizarre" and contacted the office of the RTC's inspector general, which determined that I had, in fact, been followed by a contractor hired by the RTC. The inspector general's report also confirmed that RTC officials gave my Social Security number to the contractor in response to a request for information that could be used to ascertain my home address, and that they did so despite knowing that authorizing a surveillance of me "would be wrong

After being terminated from the RTC, I submitted numerous job applications to financial institutions throughout the eastern United States. On a number of occasions, I reached the



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Council

PLASTIC MAKES IT POSSIBLE

sition as an asset manager. On May 3, I was offered

[illegible] On May

11. I received four or five asset cases to manage,

[illegible]

time, I made telephone calls to my former office, the RTC office in Valley Forge, and introduced myself as the new asset manager at Coopers.

On the afternoon of May 11, the Coopers manager who had hired me called me into his office for a closed-door meeting. He informed me that Coopers had received information that would preclude it from proceeding with our relationship. He advised me that I was being discharged and asked me to leave the premises immediately.

I requested an explanation for this, but the manager refused. I then asked if I had in any way offended anyone at Coopers or performed unsatisfactorily, and was informed that I had not. However, when I asked whether any negative references or reports about me had been given by outside sources, the manager refused to answer.

Justifiably disturbed that my yearlong effort to put the RTC behind me was thwarted, I retained counsel, who contacted Coopers and inquired about the basis for my termination.

In response, Coopers wrote:

> On May 11, 1994, we were informed from sources within the RTC that while in their employ, Mr. Dunn began making threats and claimed to have a gun. The situation became so serious that at one meeting of senior RTC officials, four armed guards were hired by the RTC for protection. Mr. Dunn's picture was provided to the guards with instructions that Mr. Dunn should be considered dangerous.
>
> We were also informed by the RTC that Coopers & Lybrand was specifically prohibited from using Mr. Dunn on any RTC-related work.
>
> Due to our concern for the safety of our people, and the fact that Mr. Dunn was specifically prohibited by the RTC from doing the work we had intended to hire him for, we had no choice but to dismiss Mr. Dunn immediately.

In response, I must state categorically that I never threatened any RTC employee, threatened to disrupt a meeting of senior RTC officials, or claimed to have a gun. In fact, I have never owned a handgun.

When I was terminated from the RTC, my salary was approximately $49,000 a year. My loss of salary was ameliorated somewhat by unemployment benefits. My right to these expired in February, however, and, except for some occasional consulting work, I am now without income with which to support myself.

My means of overcoming this predicament is to secure employment in my chosen professional field outside of the RTC. The overwhelming majority of positions for which I could qualify, however, are for private institutions that perform substantial work for the RTC. As my experience with Coopers & Lybrand demonstrates, the RTC is able to continue to retaliate against me by virtue of its dominant position as a client of prospective employers. My reputation is vital to the pursuit of my career. The damage that has been done and continues to be done by the RTC to my reputation threatens to make me unemployable forever.

FATAL ACCIDENTS: THE BRIGHT SIDE

The following letter to the editor by Lawrence A. Bullis, originally published in the Arizona Republic, *appeared in issue number 49 of* View from the Ledge, *a 'zine published by Chuck Shepherd in St. Petersburg, Florida. Bullis lives in Phoenix.*

E

[illegible]

save us from ourselves. We have so many laws and safety commissions to ensure our safety that

[illegible]

The problem is that we need accidents, and lots

[illegible]

people. Without safety, stupid people die in accidents. Since the dead don't reproduce, our species becomes progressively more intelligent (or at least less stupid).

With safety, however well-intentioned it may be, we are devolving into half-witted mutants, because idiots, who by all rights should be dead, are spared from their rightful early graves and are free to breed even more imbeciles.

Let's do away with safety and improve our species. Take up smoking. Jaywalk. Play with blasting caps. Swim right after a big meal. Stick something small in your ear. Take your choice of dangerous activity, and do it with gusto. Future



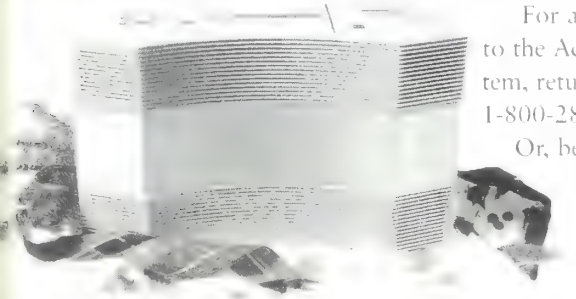
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ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS ARAFAT

From an editorial that appeared in the September 5 issue of [illegible]

on July 1, in engaging in "anti-Arafat propaganda." The newspaper, which was known for its pro-Jordanian stance, reported on July 25 that Jordan had signed an accord with Israel recognizing Jordan's role in maintaining Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem. The agreement and, by extension, an-Nahar's report were reportedly seen by Yasir Arafat as a challenge to the PLO's authority in the West Bank. On July 28 copies of an-Nahar *were confiscated by Palestinian police. West Bank newsstand owners were told that their stands would be burned down if it* [illegible] *between an-Nahar's publisher and Arafat, the paper was allowed to publish again on condition that it remain loyal to the PLO.*

T [illegible] publication today after an absence of thirty-six days, [illegible] its inception, to consecrate its principles; that is, to be a paper that is Palestinian to the bone and Arab to the marrow.

[illegible] and brethren from the diaspora began to return, led by Abu Ammar [Yasir Arafat], the brother, the leader, the symbol. As *an-Nahar* witnessed the great consecutive victories of our heroic people and monitored their great achievements, represented by their own National Authority, it had one slogan: "Palestine . . . And Palestine Above Everyone." Palestine will never be for anyone except our people.

The ban on *an-Nahar* was just a summer cloud that has now passed, taking its causes with it. *An-Nahar* will continue to defend the people and expose their suffering until all hopes and aspirations are realized. We at *an-Nahar* have always resisted those in the middle of the road, people who dilute logic and the truth, who strive to be in the [illegible] regard for the national interest. We are confident

[illegible]

ALDRICH AMES AND THE CIA'S DARK HISTORY

From "Aldrich Ames and the Conduct of American Intelligence," by Caleb Carr, in the Fall issue of World Policy Journal. *Carr is a contributing editor of* MHQ: The Quarterly Journal of Military History; *he is the author, most recently, of* The Alienist.

Just as every society is punished with the criminals it deserves, so are individual nations afflicted with traitors whose actions reveal much about the state they have betrayed. And although the deeds of such traitors may be appalling, their rationalizations sometimes make very good sense. However dastardly Benedict Arnold's vain attempt to betray West Point in 1780, for example, he was quite justified in resenting the way that he and the Continental Army had been treated by a niggardly Congress and an often ambivalent American people. In characters such as Benedict Arnold we see our national darknesses revealed, which is no small part of the reason for our strident repudiation of them.

On the surface, Aldrich H. Ames has none of the flamboyance of Arnold; but then, the world in which Ames toiled—that of international espionage—was one of the dreariest imaginable. A plain appearance and unassuming manner served him well in his life as a CIA operative; but his statement to the world on April 28—released after he had been convicted in federal district court of acts of espionage that cost the lives of at least twelve agents working for the CIA—revealed that he is not a dispassionate man. Ames uncompromisingly condemned the agency that had employed him for most of his life, calling its activities "a self-serving sham, carried out by careerist bureaucrats." He maintained that although he had sold top-secret information concerning U.S. counterintelligence agents to the Russians for millions of dollars, his actions did not harm American vital interests—not because those agents were not compromised or killed but because American counterintelligence work overall is irrelevant to the pursuit of American vital interests. Such work is, in Ames's phrase, "a sideshow."

Given the collapse of the Soviet Union, many officials and observers in Washington have reacted to Ames's statement by ruefully nodding their heads and wondering if we might now be able to change the way we conduct espionage operations. But such suggestions miss the fundamental point of Ames's criticisms of the CIA and the American intelligence community generally: that

[Menu]

A P.R. TURKEY, SERVED ON A BED OF FUNDING

From a "Holiday Dinner Menu" distributed this fall to the media by the American Council on Science and Health. Each food item listed below is followed by the naturally occurring chemicals it contains that, according to the council, may be carcinogenic in large doses. According to an accompanying essay, the cancer risks from natural foods "substantially outweigh those from man-made chemicals." The council, which was founded in 1978 as a nonprofit "public-education group," refused to publish its annual list of funders this year; in 1992 the list included sixteen of the twenty largest U.S. chemical manufacturers, as well as the Sugar Association, the National Soft Drink Association, the NutraSweet Company, Frito-Lay, and the Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola companies.

APPETIZER

Cream of Mushroom Soup
(hydrazines)

FRESH VEGETABLE TRAY

Carrots
(carotatoxin, isoflavones, myristicin, nitrate)

Radishes
(glucosinolates, nitrate)

Cherry Tomatoes
(hydrogen peroxide, glycosides, quercetin, nitrate, tomatine)

ENTREES

Roast Turkey
(heterocyclic amines, malonaldehyde)

Stuffing
(benzo(a)pyrene, di- and tri-sulfides, dihydrazines, ethylcarbamate, furan derivatives, psoralens, safrole)

Cranberry Sauce
(eugenol, furan derivatives)

Sweet Potato
(cyanogenetic glycosides, furan derivatives, nitrate)

DESSERTS

Pumpkin Pie
(myristicin, nitrate, safrole)

Apple Pie
(acetaldehyde, glycosides, isoflavones, phlorizin, quercetin, safrole)

BEVERAGES

Coffee
(benzo(a)pyrene, caffeine, chlorogenic acid, hydrogen peroxide, methylglyoxal, tannins)

Water
(nitrate)

American counterintelligence and covert operations have *always* been of little value at best, and morally and politically dangerous (not to mention economically expensive) at worst. Ames declares:

> The espionage business, as carried out by the CIA and a few other American agencies, *was and is* a self-serving sham, carried out by careerist bureaucrats who have managed to deceive several *generations* of American policy makers and the public about both the necessity and the value of their work. [Emphasis added.]

Despite his treachery, Ames has long been in a position to know whereof he speaks concerning American intelligence. Thus it is imperative that we examine the traitor Ames's criticisms and see if they hold any water at all.

The American intelligence system is as old as the republic itself, having been born during the Revolution with the organization of the Continental secret service, commanded by one of George Washington's most trusted lieutenants, the dashing dragoon Major Benjamin Tallmadge. For the following 175 years, America's intelligence community concerned itself precisely with *intelligence*, the gathering of useful information concerning other nations of the world that could be used by elected officials and cabinet appointees. To a very large extent, Americans prior to 1941 were able to hold themselves above the quagmires of spying, bribery, and assassination that had for so many centuries characterized diplomatic affairs in other parts of the world.

More than any other event or condition, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor changed all that. The December 7, 1941, disaster was seen within both the government and the military largely as an intelligence failure. Groundbreaking American cryptologists had played a vital role in protecting American security by intercepting and decoding top-level Japanese communications, but our intelligence experts and military high command were not able to interpret those dispatches so as to avoid the Japanese attack. The fact that Pearl Harbor might well have been unavoidable—that every nation in the world is vulnerable to surprise attack if the attacker is determined and clever enough—was for the most part disregarded during the panic that followed the attack. If in the future intelligence was suffi-

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POUR SOMETHING PRICELESS.

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"[illegible] MAGOO" [illegible] TO EIGHT EYE-SNAPS PER MISDEMEANOR.





[illegible] "New Axis Criminal," in the Fall issue of Mouth2Mouth, [illegible] Mag[illegible]

a series of punishments that "re[illegible]

essarily more analytical (such as Lebanon). Thus the CIA's taste for operations has not helped —has, in fact, harmed—the pursuit of American interests abroad.

And so we return to the words of Aldrich Ames. It may be true that he overstates his case when he says that "the espionage business, as carried out by the CIA and a few other agencies, was and is a self-serving sham." But when we search through the rubble of failed overseas operations, it is almost always the CIA that turns up underneath.

The American system of government has from its inception embodied advances that have made us the "last best hope of mankind"; but there have been regrettable lapses in that march, lapses that may yet undo the good. Our acceptance of varieties of international conduct that we had, prior to Pearl Harbor, consistently rejected as immoral and unnecessary ranks in its dark magnitude with the failure to include blacks and women in the promise of the Declaration of Independence and with the extermination of the American Indians. This ought to mean far more than the incalculable economic cost of, or even the threat posed to our Constitution by, overseas intelligence operations.

The rejoinder to this admittedly familiar complaint has generally been that, whatever the moral cost, the United States must have intelligence. But that rejoinder is laced with historical ignorance; for the United States has, in fact, always *had* intelligence. True, it was not such that it could protect us from Pearl Harbor, but there is no intelligence operation that could have or can now guarantee such protection. There are, quite simply, limits to what intelligence can do: in this as in so many fields, the responsibility of modern Americans is to learn and accept those limitations.

The practical implications of these conclusions are fairly clear. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D., N.Y.) will be right if he puts forward a bill, as he has suggested he may, that proposes an end to the CIA; but he will be misguided if he advocates the reassignment of the CIA's duties to other agencies. Once the CIA is gone, we should push hard to make all American intelligence services nonoperational beyond the basic goal of divining foreign intentions by studying foreign actions and communications.

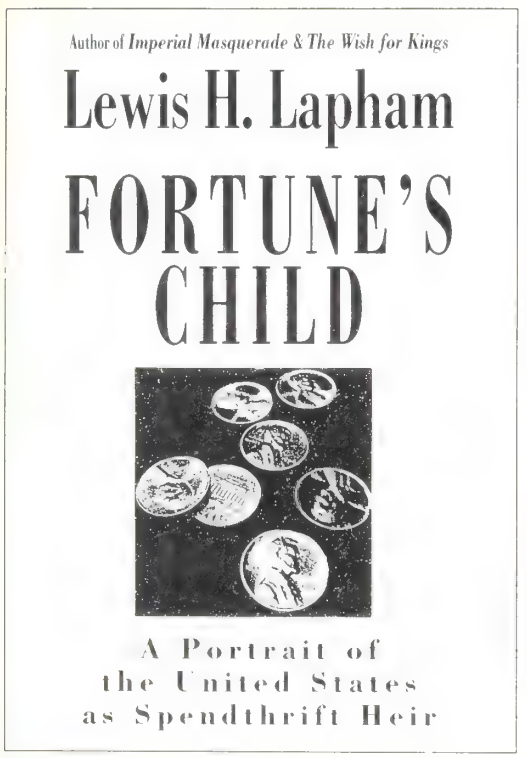
Even given such a program of reform, of course, mistakes will continue to be made: we will listen to some of the wrong conversations, anger allies occasionally, and even impose on the rights of American citizens from time to time. But these will be regrettable rather than repugnant blunders; in committing them we will look far more like the essentially honorable republic we once were than like an Italian Renaissance city-state, which is what our international conduct for the last half-century has suggested.

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A selection of the work by Ms. Snyder will be on display next month at the Buckley Gallery, in Minneap

GIRL WONDER

From The Story of Mary MacLane, *by Mary MacLane, first published in 1902, when MacLane* [illegible] *MacLane went on to write for the* New York World *and the* Chicago Sunday Tribune, *among other newspapers. In 1917 she wrote and starred in* Men Who Have Made Love to Me, *an autobiographical film. She died in 1929. MacLane's diary is in-*
[illegible]
Cassandra & Brown.

I, womankind and of nineteen years, will set down as full and frank a portrayal of myself, Mary MacLane, for whom [illegible]

My brain is a conglomeration of aggressive versatility.

I have reached a truly wonderful state of miserable morbid unhappiness.

I have attained an egotism that is rare indeed.

I know myself, oh, very well.

All this constitutes oddity. I find therefore that I am quite, quite odd.

I have hunted for even the suggestion of a parallel among the several hundred persons that I call acquaintances. But in vain. There are people of varying depths and intricacies of character, but there is none to compare with me.

I am charmingly original. I am delightfully refreshing. I am startlingly Bohemian. I can talk to a roomful of dull people and compel their interest, admiration, and astonishment. I do this sometimes for my own amusement. I am a rather plain-featured, insignificant-looking creature, but I have a graceful personality. I have a pretty figure. I am well set-up. And when I choose to talk in my charmingly original fashion, embellishing my conversation with many quaint lies, I have a certain very noticeable way with me, an "air."

I do not, however, exert myself often in this way — partly because I can sometimes foresee, from the character of the assembled company, that my performance will not have the desired effect. For I am a genius, and genius at close

fringe at times carries itself unconsciously to the point where it becomes so interesting that it is atrocious and cannot be carried further without having somewhat mildly disastrous results.

Always I talk about myself on an occasion of this kind. Indeed, my conversation is on all occasions devoted directly or indirectly to myself.

At the age of nineteen I know that I am a genius.

I know I am a genius more than any genius that has lived.

I have a feeling that the world will never know this.

And as I think of it I wonder if angels are not weeping somewhere because of it.

[Autobiography]

A WRITER'S (VERY) EARLY YEARS

From "Biography of a Prose Style," by Daniel Harris, in the Summer issue of Salmagundi. *Harris's article "Making Kitsch from AIDS" appeared in the July issue of* Harper's Magazine.

I am eight years old, and I am writing my homesick sister, Lynn, who is spending the summer at Camp Far Horizons, languishing over wienie roasts and moping through campfire sing-alongs. She has been badgering my parents to force me to send her a letter, which, in my callous disregard for what seems to me nothing but mushy sentimentality, I write only under the direst threats of being grounded or having my twenty-five-cent allowance revoked. It is the sole remaining letter from my childhood and thus ground zero of my prose style, the nucleus from which everything I have written since has emerged:

> Dear Lynn,
>
> I am having fun. Hummy got out today. This is one of the thing that happened to. Mary Margret couldent find her maceer she looked and looked I look in my desk and there it was.
>
> Last night there was a fire we saw the fire. I miss you two.
>
> Love Dan

Beneath the chaos of this dyslexic note, one can see if not the seeds of my later prose style then at least a characteristic attitude toward the act of writing—specifically, a snide disesteem for my very first audience, my woebegone sister. Even here in these imbecilic paragraphs, whose jagged letters steer a drunken course above and below the paper's ruled lines, it is possible to discern a hint

[Press Release]

A MIRROR FOR THE REFLECTIVE

From a press release issued last summer by the True Mirror Company in New York City. "V.I.P. v.I.P." True Mirror costs $195.

The True Mirror Company has created a mirror that will revolutionize the way people view themselves. Constructed from two mirrors positioned at an exact 90 degree angle, the True Mirror reflects true images of its viewers, it does not reverse images the way all other mirrors do. When a person looks in an ordinary mirror and raises his right arm, what he sees is his image raising the arm on the left side. In a True Mirror, the reflection actually raises the right arm; the mirror thus provides a true picture of how he appears to others. This can result in key improvements in styles of hair and clothing, especially if the style is purposely asymmetrical. For example, wearing a beret at different angles produces entirely different looks. By using the True Mirror, a person can determine which look truly suits him the best.

For some, the True Mirror has an additional, much deeper effect. It reveals hidden aspects of their inner selves. Viewers notice that certain qualities appear in the True Mirror that they never saw before, especially what can be best described as their "inner spark" or "light." This is possibly a result of the split between the left brain and the right brain. Because the brain has two different parts, it sends different messages from each side; these messages appear on different sides of the face, where they merge to form personality. By reversing the two sides, a typical mirror presents a vision that is quite different from the real person; what one sees in the True Mirror is much more lifelike.

This feature of the True Mirror will help people understand why others react to them the way they do. It will show them who they actually are and what they really want out of life.

Comments from viewers:

"How often I have looked in mirrors and noticed that the pieces and parts don't flow. This True Mirror showed me that I am beautiful within and without."

"Is this who I really am? No wonder other people relate to me differently than I expect."

"Thank you for providing an outside method for inner vision. You've taken a prop of vanity and turned it into a tool for growth."

THOMAS JEFFERSON WISHED TO BE REMEMBERED MORE FOR THE FOUNDING OF A COLLEGE THAN THE FATHERING OF A COUNTRY.

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identities we leave strewn in our wakes as we try [illegible] writers are, ironically, the worst book burners around, systematically effacing our traces, burning our diaries, obliterating the record—all in an effort to pretend that we have not changed, have not developed, were always exactly as you find us now, having sprung like Athena from Zeus' head, fully formed and armed to the teeth. We attempt to deceive others into believing that there was no self-experimentation, no posing, no lying, no insincerity, that we were born with a fully evolved style—an illusion that we cling to ferociously, presiding over our reputations as if we were our own bodyguards, our own curators, the executors of our own carefully bowdlerized estates.

Some of this shame stems no doubt from a belief central to the Judeo-Christian tradition: that we are all born with a clearly defined character and that any attempt to become someone else, to imitate Thoreau or Lao-tzu or Kierkegaard, represents an unpardonable act of self-betrayal, of disloyalty to some sort of God-given soul or temperament. But because neither our personalities nor our prose styles are emanations of an intrinsic sensibility, such a view seriously misrepresents the task of self-construction, which invariably involves insincerity and impersonation, the petty thefts we make when we mimic those who have a stronger sense of selfhood than we do. To believe otherwise, to burn our diaries, to turn our backs on the selves that we have been in the past, is the ultimate act of self-betrayal, the ultimate imposture, one far more ludicrous and insincere than the poses I struck in my loathsome diaries.

It is difficult to have compassion for oneself, to make peace with the voices that are still speaking in one's style. In a moment of unusual foresight when I was eighteen, I imagined what it would be like to read my diaries when I was older:

> I wonder if I will ever reread these words again and [illegible] think of them when I am old and wise. What shall I see in my foolishness? I will surely [illegible] I am so afraid I will be unkind to myself when I am old and wise, and [illegible] which is rightfully mine—this [illegible] this inarticulate [illegible] youth.

I was always writing for posterity, and now at last, some fifteen years later, I have become posterity. Although it would be asking too much for me to forgive my former excesses, I find that my heart goes out to this strange creature from the past, and I find myself replying that while I cannot be kind, I will not disown what is rightfully mine—this foolish blind youth, this inarticulate [illegible]





I mean on some level of photographs by Peter Menzel in Material Culture, *the contemplation of meat [illegible] around the world for tourists in which meat is eaten. The kids' shots from a bit to [illegible] Menzel's [illegible] Hungry Planet [illegible] dreams) Honey Nut Corn Cream Filled Chocolate Chips and Vanilla Ice. Paths chicken liver pate with glazed [illegible] Dinner with photographs [illegible] from Australia, the other two in Mexico. You can live to eat [illegible] note by Menzel that accompanies the [illegible] [illegible] like a meaty photo [illegible] on earth.*

[Memoir]

SINS OF THE FLESH

From "Meat," by Sallie Tisdale, in the Summer issue of The Antioch Review. *Tisdale is a contributing editor of* Harper's Magazine. *She is the author of* Talk Dirty to Me: An Intimate Philosophy of Sex, *published this month by Doubleday and based on her essay in the February 1992 issue of* Harper's.

I went to the butcher's several times a week as a child. Meat was always in my life. The butcher shop was just down the street from our house, past the old, squat Carnegie Library, the Elks Club, the Groceteria, the bakery, and the big stucco fire department with its long driveway. I loved the Meat Market best; it was orderly, with the hushed front room encased in windows. The floor was golden oak, shiny and clean, facing a horseshoe of white metal display cases curving away like the fabric of space. The air held the scent of clean skin.

I would fry my hot cheek against the cool glass and gaze at the meat inside: flaccid steaks, roasts, and sausages in neat rows like tile or shingles laid atop one another in patterns of soft red, pink, and maroon. I knew the textures—they were my textures. I liked to examine the down on my legs, the way the irises of my eyes opened and closed when I turned the light above the bathroom mirror off and on, the intricate mess of my belly button. I pulled scabs off and chewed them, and licked the ooze that followed. The rump roast in the glass case made a delicious metaphor, the curve of my own pliable buttocks. Me, but not me.

On panting summer days our basement beckoned, crowded and lifeless, the air cool, musty, and dim after the glazed sunlight. No one would find me there, if anyone cared to look for me. Most of the small basement was filled with a freezer, which my mother, one arm bone-line of carefully organized women, kept filled to overflowing again (catastrophic! Piercingly my mother's voice at the top of the stairs: "Shut the freezer!"—trailing off into words I didn't bother to hear.) Its heavy white lid seemed to lift from the stiff latch with relief and swing up so that a waft of the freezer's queer fog blew in my face. My taut, tanned skin could breathe again in the damp. There was often a whole side of beef and more in the freezer, broken up into cuts for the TV dinners and the sprints of bean soup and rice cream. Each cut was wrapped in white freezer paper and labeled with red wax crayon in strange abbreviations: "ELK STK 4 =" and "P CHOPS – 6." The irregular, heavy packets sat in the cold rough like a hoped-for and pile of white rocks littered with food.

There was never a meal without meat; every afternoon the house filled with the scent of thawing flesh. The long-dimensioned, [illegible]

for meat. And if you had leaned over me when I was four or five or six and suggested I eat an animal, I might have been shocked. I loved animals more, and more easily, than I loved my parents. I held my old dog, a dour mongrel Lab, for hours in my room sometimes, telling him what I couldn't tell anyone else; I was weak with him because he kept my secrets. I loved horses, goats, deer, and the cattle chewing stupidly by the back-road fences; in my bedroom I kept lizards, snakes, chameleons, and a rat, and that was all my mother allowed. And it was my mother who one day told me where meat came from, as though it were the most natural thing.

I was about seven when I asked, that age when one begins to see the depth of betrayal in the world, that one can't really count on things after all. And my mother answered yes, the chicken we ate for dinner was the same as the chickens down the street I would cluck at through the fence, the ones with the thick white feathers that filled the breeze. The peeled skin of the wieners Mr. Bryan gave me were loops of intestine washed clean, and their pulp a ground mash of bodies and bones. The unbelievable objects had a name, a face, a history; the sweet and salty taste was the taste of blood, the same as my blood. It came all at once, like a blow, that pickled pigs' feet was not a colorful metaphor but the very thing, that I had eaten a *pig's* foot, and much more.

I lived on bare noodles and peanut-butter sandwiches for a long time after that. I wouldn't allow my mother to spoon the sausage-flavored spaghetti sauce onto my plate. A few years later it seemed less important, the resistance too hard. Perhaps I had had other surprises; it's hard to remember whole sections of those years. I've gone years without eating meat as an adult, and years when I was too tired not to eat whatever was in front of me. And there have been times when I craved flesh, when I broiled and roasted, made scratch gravy and giblet dressing like my mother's, or sat at my long dining table with steamed clams clattering against my fork, times when I longed for the irreducible flavors of meat, to be full of meat. Yet I will even now find myself knocked flat sometimes when I see meat in front of me and realize what I'm doing. It's a heartfelt knowledge; it is visceral, gut-level, organic. I hold the steak with a fork and begin to cut a slice, and my stomach turns upside down; it feels as if I'm cutting my own flesh off and that I'll choke to death upon it, like a prisoner fed his own treacherous, boiled

One shock after another. Breasts and hips and hair, more of the pleasures and debts of flesh. I began to bleed several days a month, and when I sat to pee the smell rose up yeasty and rich. I found furtive darting touches: I found lips, saliva,



Three Wolves," by Sally Mann, part of an exhibit currently on display at the Houk Friedman Gallery, in New ork City. Immediate Family, *a collection of Mann's photographs of her children, is published by Aperture. Mann es in Virginia*

tongues, sweat, fingers. My dog decayed from the inside out, and stank and stumbled and licked the mysterious lumps under his fur. I traced his ribs so near the surface the day before he died. Then my mother yellowed and thickened and wept and died, and my father's big arms hung loose and his black hair turned gray. I knelt between the knees of a boy a little older than myself and took his penis in my mouth, and smiled not with pleasure or appetite but with triumph, behind the curtain of my swaying hair. I moved out to the fleshy edges of things, and finally I grew wings like angel wings, and I flew away.

The word "butcher" comes—a long way down the years—from the word "buck." He-goat. They are set aside, butchers, into their own unions, their own neighborhoods, their own bars, set aside. I don't know if it means anything that besides Mr. Bryan, my father's closest friend was the undertaker; it may not be anything more than the limits of a small town. But I think of the Butcher's Mass, their special blessing, and the *shehitah* of the Jews. The *shochet*, the slaughterer, who must be pious and above reproach, must be as swift and painless as he can be in the killing, murmuring a benediction near the animal's ear and following with a graceful stroke across the throat. I think of Mr. Bryan's cleaver.

The Meat Market burned down on a hot day under a blank blue sky. It was apocalypse. It was a great fire. I stood at the end of the alley and watched the flames spurt out the back door in gouty bursts. I heard a shriek of metal inside and guessed the white metal cooler had turned red and ignited its own frost. The smoke billowed out the back door in a cottony black cloud, and I clapped my hands. Men in turnouts and boots rushed past and paid me no attention, and I saw my father paying out the hose from the pumper with great speed.

The meat burned; the water washed it clean. I learned later that Mr. Bryan had inherited the Meat Market from his father, and he'd secretly hated it all those years, going home at night with the stink of blood on his hands and hair. He is still jolly and thick-fingered, and he still comes by to visit my father, who is tired and gruff and without cheer. They have been retired from fires, too old to go into the heat and pull things out. For myself, I know you can't be cleansed until you know how dirty you really are. I still live far away, still seek salvation from my many sins. ■



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THE REVOLT OF THE ELITES

Have they canceled their allegiance to America?

By Christopher Lasch

When Jose Ortega y Gasset published *The Revolt of the Masses* in 1930, he could not have foreseen a time when it would be more appropriate to speak of a revolt of the elites. Writing in the era of the Bolshevik revolution and the rise of fascism, in the aftermath of a cataclysmic war that had torn Europe apart, Ortega attributed the crisis of Western culture to the "political domination of the masses." In our time, however, the chief threat seems to come not from the masses but from those at the top of the social hierarchy, the elites who control the international flow of money and information, preside over philanthropic foundations and institutions of higher learning, manage the instruments of cultural production, and thus set the terms of public debate. Members of the elite have lost faith in the values, or what remains of them, of the West. For many people, the very term "Western civilization" now calls to mind an organized system of domination designed to enforce conformity to bourgeois values and to keep the victims of patriarchal oppression—women, children, homosexuals, people of color—in a permanent state of subjection. In a remarkable turn of events that confounds our expectations about the course of history, something that Ortega never dreamed of has occurred—the revolt of the elites.

From Ortega's point of view, one that was widely shared at the time, the value of cultural elites lay in their willingness to assume responsibility for the exacting standards without which civilization is impossible. They lived in the service of demanding ideals. "Nobility," Ortega wrote, "is defined by the demands it makes on us—by obligations, not by rights." The mass man, on the other hand, had no use for obligations and no understanding of what they implied, "no feeling for [the] great historical duties." Instead, he asserted the "rights of the commonplace." At once resentful and self-satisfied, he rejected "everything that is excellent, individual, qualified, and select." Lacking any comprehension of the fragility of civilization or the tragic character of history, he was concerned only with his own well-being and looked forward to a future

Christopher Lasch, who died in February 1994, was a historian and social critic. His best known books are The Culture of Narcissism (1979) *and* The True and Only Heaven (1991). *This essay is adapted from his book* The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy, *to be published in January 1995 by W. W. Norton.*

...n to the makers of educated opinion, so hopelessly Jewish, so much more ... and provincial. They are at once absurd and vaguely menacing—not be... ether they wish to overthrow the old order (for which purpose they often ... appears so deeply irrational that it expresses itself, at the higher reaches ... intensity, in mystical religiosity, in repressive sexuality that sometimes ... upts into violence against women and even in the glorification of ... ports imperialist war and ethnic cleansing as ... masculinity. Simultaneously arrogant and insecure, the new elites regard the masses with mingled scorn and apprehension.

The revolt of the elites against older conceptions of prudence and ...straint is occurring at a time when the general course of history no longer ...rs the leveling of social distinctions but runs more and more in the di... ion of a two-class society in which the favored few monopolize the ad... ages of money, education, and power. It is undeniable, of course, that the ...forts of modern life are still distributed far more widely than they were ...re the Industrial Revolution. It was this democratization of comfort that ...ga had in mind when he spoke of the "rise of the historic level." Like many ...rs, Ortega was struck by the unheard-of abundance generated by the mod... division of labor, by the transformation of luxuries into necessities, and ...he popularization of standards of comfort and convenience formerly con... d to the rich. These facts—the material fruits of modernization—are ... in question. In our time, however, the democratization of abundance—... expectation that each generation would enjoy a standard of living beyond ... reach of its predecessors—has given way to a reversal in which age-old ...qualities are beginning to reestablish themselves, sometimes ... frightening rate, sometimes so gradually as to escape notice.

...eople in the upper 20 percent of the income structure now ...trol half the country's wealth. In the last twenty years, only ... have experienced a net gain in family income. In the brief years ...he Reagan Administration alone, their share of the national in... e rose from 41.5 percent to 44 percent. The middle class, gen... sly defined as those with incomes ranging from $15,000 to ...,000 a year, declined from 61 percent of the population in 197... 2 percent in 1985. These figures convey only a partial, imper... impression of momentous changes that have taken place in a ...arkably short period of time. The steady growth of unemploy... nt, now expanded to include white-collar workers, is more re... ling. So is the growth of the "contingent labor force." The ...nber of part-time jobs has doubled since 1980 and now amounts ... quarter of all available jobs. No doubt this massive growth of ...-time employment helps to explain why the number of work... covered by retirement plans, which rose from 22 percent to 45 ...ent between 1950 and 1980, slipped back to 42.6 percent by ...6. It also helps to explain the decline in union membership ... the steady erosion of union influence. All these developments, in turn, ...ct the loss of manufacturing jobs and the shift to an economy increasingly ...d on information and services.



...he upper middle class, the heart of the new professional and managerи... lites, is defined, apart from its rapidly rising income, not so much by its ...blogy as by a way of life that distinguishes it, more and more unmistak... , from the rest of the population. This way of life is glamorous, gaudy, some... es indecently lavish. The prosperity enjoyed by the professional and ...hagerial classes, which make up most of the upper 20 percent of the in... e structure, derives in large part from the emerging marital pattern in... gantly known as "assortative mating"—the tendency of men to marry ...men who can be relied on to bring in income more or less equivalent to ... r own. Doctors used to marry nurses; lawyers and executives, their sec... ries. Now upper-middle-class men tend to marry women of their own class, ... ness or professional associates with lucrative careers of their own. "What



in the income statistics by the low average wages of women," Kaus adds, [illegible] is in fact happening." It is unnecessary to seek further for an explanation [illegible] feminism's appeal to the professional and managerial class.

How should this new social elite be described? Their investment in [illegible] cation and information, as opposed to property, distinguishes them from [illegible] rich bourgeoisie, the ascendancy of which characterized an earlier stage of [illegible] [illegible] proprietary class—the middle class, in the strict [illegible] [illegible] made up the bulk of the population. These groups [illegible] stitute a "new class" only in the sense that their livelihood rests not so m[illegible] [illegible] property as on the manipulation of information and [illegible] fessional expertise. They embrace too wide a variety of occupations—bro[illegible] bankers, real-estate promoters and developers, engineers, consultants [illegible] kinds, systems analysts, scientists, doctors, publicists, publishers, editors [illegible] vertising executives, art directors, moviemakers, entertainers, journa[illegible] television producers and directors, artists, writers, university professors [illegible] be described as a "new class" or a "new ruling class." Furthermore, they [illegible] a common political outlook.

In Secretary of Labor Robert Reich, the new American [illegible] has found its philosopher. Reich's category of "symbolic anal[illegible] in his book *The Work of Nations* serves as a clumsy but useful, [illegible] pirical, and rather unpretentious description of the new elite. T[illegible] are people, as Reich describes them, who live in a world of abst[illegible] concepts and symbols, ranging from stock-market quotations to [illegible] visual images produced by Hollywood and Madison Avenue, [illegible] who specialize in the interpretation and deployment of symb[illegible] information. Reich contrasts them with the two other principal [illegible] egories of labor—"routine producers," who perform repetitive t[illegible] and exercise little control over the design of production, and [illegible] person servers," whose work also consists of the routine, for the m[illegible] part, but "must be provided person-to-person" and therefore [illegible] not be "sold worldwide." If we allow for the highly schematic [illegible] necessarily imprecise character of these categories, they corresp[illegible] closely enough to everyday observation to give us a fairly accu[illegible] impression not only of the occupational structure but of the c[illegible] structure of American society today. The "symbolic analysts" [illegible] clearly rising in wealth and status while the other categories, wh[illegible] make up 80 percent of the population, are declining.

Reich's portrait of the "symbolic analysts" is extravagantly flattering. I[illegible] [illegible] them to represent the best and brightest in American life. Educated at "[illegible] private schools" and "high-quality suburban public schools, where they [illegible] tracked through advanced courses," they enjoy every advantage their do[illegible] parents can provide.

[illegible] their academic needs. They have [illegible] interactive computers and video [illegible] and high-tech school libraries. T[illegible] classes are relatively small; their peers are intellectually stimulating. Their par[illegible] [illegible] them to foreign travel, and [illegible] "home computers" to [illegible] illustrated books, educational toys, ed[illegible] [illegible] and personal computers replete wit[illegible] latest educational software.

These privileged young people acquire advanced degrees at the "best [u[illegible] versities] in the world," the superiority of which is proved by their abilit[illegible] attract foreign students in great numbers. In this cosmopolitan atmosph[illegible] "they overcome the provincial folkways that impede creative thought, accord[illegible] Reich. "Skeptical, curious, and creative," they become problem solvers

llence, equal to any challenge. Unlike those who engage in mind numb
g routines, they love their work, which engages them in lifelong learning
endless experimentation.

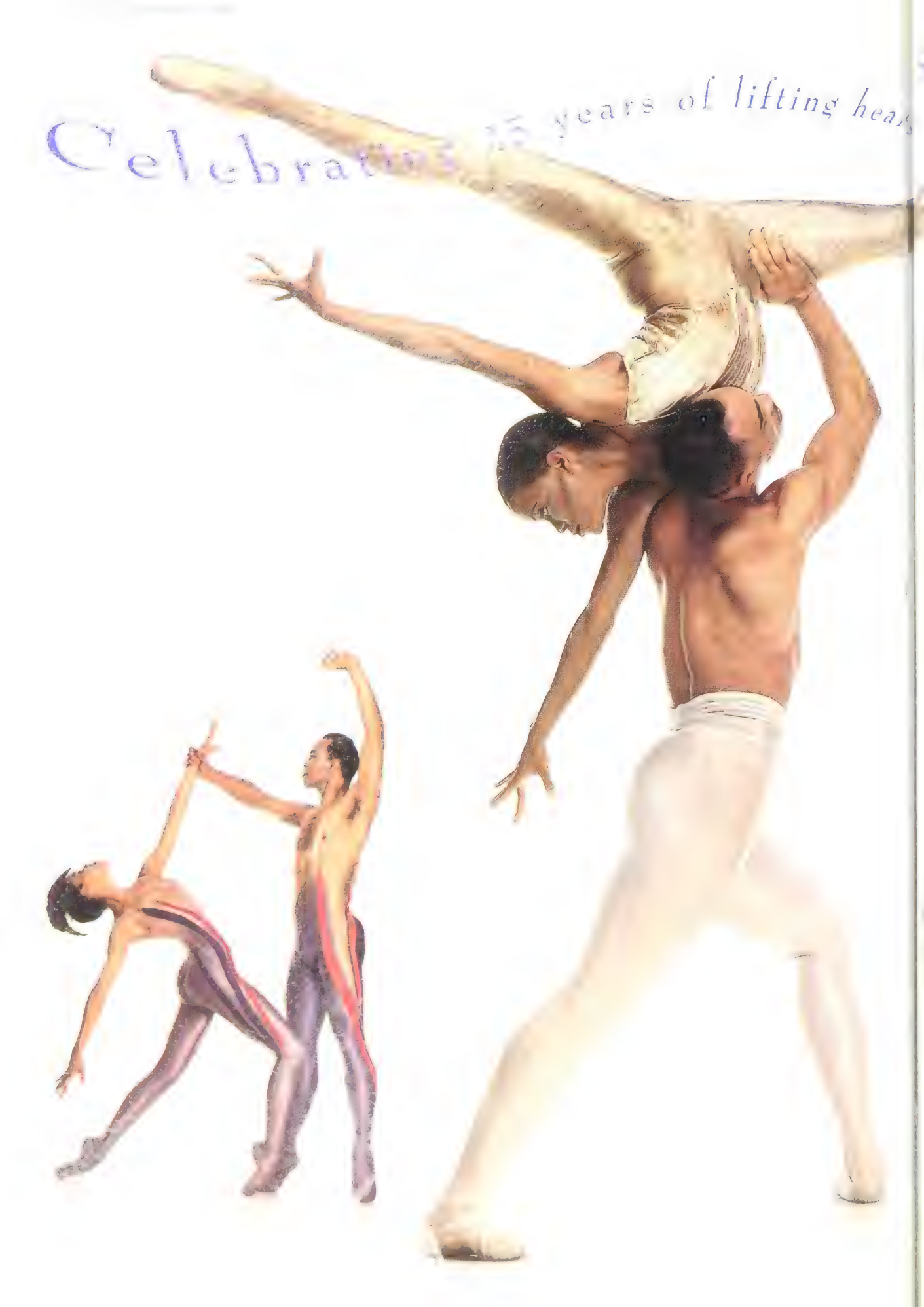
old-fashioned intellectuals tend to work by themselves and to be jealou
possessive about their ideas. By contrast, the new brain workers—p
ers of high-quality "insights" in a variety of fields ranging from market
and finance to art and entertainment—operate best in teams. Their
acity to collaborate" promotes "system thinking"—the ability to see
blems in their totality, to absorb the fruits of collective experimentation,
to "discern larger causes, consequences, and relationships." Since their
k depends so heavily on "networking," they settle in "specialized geographic
kets" populated by people like themselves. These privileged communities—
nbridge, Silicon Valley, Hollywood—become "wondrously resilient" cen
of artistic, technical, and promotional enterprise. These new workers
resent the epitome of intellectual achievement, in Reich's admiring view,
of the good life conceived as the exchange of "insights," "information,"
professional gossip.

he geographical concentration of knowledge producers, once it reaches
itical mass, incidentally provides a market for the growing class of "in-
son servers" who cater to their needs. "It is no accident," says Reich,

at Hollywood is home to a conspicuously large number of voice coaches, fenc
g trainers, dance instructors, performers' agents, and suppliers of photograph
, acoustic and lighting equipment. Also found in close proximity are restaurants
ith precisely the right ambience favored by producers wooing directors and directors
wooing screenwriters, and everyone in Hollywood wooing everyone else.

niversal admission to the class of "creative" people would best meet
ich's ideal of a democratic society, but since this goal is clearly unattainable,
next best thing, presumably, is a society composed of "symbolic analysts"
their hangers-on. The latter are themselves consumed with dreams of star-
n but are content, in the meantime, to live in the shadow of the stars, wait-
to be discovered. They are symbiotically united with their betters in the
ntinuous search for marketable talent that can be compared, as Reich's
gery makes clear, only to the rites of courtship. One might add the more
adiced observation that the circles of power—finance, government, art, en-
mment—overlap and become increasingly interchangeable.

hough Reich turns to Hollywood for a particularly compelling
mple of the "wondrously resilient" communities that spring up
erever there is a concentration of "creative" people, his description of
new kind of elite community fits the nation's capital as well.
shington becomes a parody of Tinseltown; executives take to the
ivaves, creating overnight the semblance of political movements; movie
s become political pundits, even presidents; reality and the simulation
reality become more and more difficult to distinguish. Ross Perot
nches his presidential campaign from *Larry King Live*. Hollywood stars
a prominent part in the Clinton campaign and flock to Clinton's
igural, investing it with the glamour of a Hollywood opening. TV
hormen and interviewers become celebrities; celebrities in the world of
ertainment take on the role of social critics. The boxer Mike Tyson
es a three-page open letter from the Indiana prison where he is serving
x-year term for rape condemning the President's "crucifixion" of Lani
inier. The star-struck Rhodes scholar Robert Reich, prophet of the new
ld of "abstraction, system thinking, experimentation, and
laboration," joins the Clinton Administration in the incongruous
acity of secretary of labor—administrator, in other words, of the one
egory of employment ("routine production") that has no future at all
cording to his own account) in a society composed of "symbolic
lysts" and "in-person servers." Only in a world in which words and
ges bear ever less resemblance to the things they appear to describe
uld it be possible for a man like Reich to refer to himself, without irony,
secretary of labor or to write so glowingly of a society governed by "the


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Meritocratic elites find it difficult to imagine a community, even a commu
of the intellect, that reaches into both the past and the future and is cor
tuted by an awareness of intergenerational obligation. The "zones" and "
works" admired by Reich bear little resemblance to communities in
traditional sense of the term. Populated by transients, they lack the cont
ity that derives from a sense of place and from standards of conduct self-c
seriously cultivated and handed down from generation to generation.
"community" of the best and the brightest is a community of contempora

in the double sense that its members think of themselve
cisely their ability to stay on top of the latest trends.

The identification and promotion of "the best and the brightest" is
meritocratic ideal. Meritocracy, however, is a parody of democracy. It of
opportunities for advancement, in theory at least, to anyone with the tal
to seize them; but "opportunities to rise," as R. H. Tawney pointed out in *Eq*
ity, "are no substitute for a general diffusion of the means of civilization,
the "dignity and culture" that are needed by all "whether they rise or n
Social mobility does not undermine the influence of elites; if anything, it h
to solidify their influence by supporting the illusion that it rests solely on m
it. Furthering upward mobility merely strengthens the likelihood that el
will exercise power irresponsibly, precisely because they recognize so
obligations to their predecessors or to the communities they profess to le
Their lack of gratitude disqualifies meritocratic elites from the burden
leadership, and, in any case, they are less interested in leadership than in
caping from the common lot—the very definition of meritocratic succe

The inner logic of meritocracy has seldom been more rigorously expo
than in the British writer Michael Young's dystopian novel, *The Rise of*
Meritocracy 1870–2033 (1959), a work written in the tradition of Tawr
G.D.H. Cole, George Orwell, E. P. Thompson, and Raymond Willia
Young's narrator, a historian writing in the fourth decade of the twenty-f
century, approvingly chronicles the "fundamental change" of the century
a halt beginning around 1870—the redistribution of intelligence "betwe
the classes." "By imperceptible degrees an aristocracy of birth has turned
to an aristocracy of talent." Thanks to industry's adoption of intelligence t
ing, the abandonment of the principle of seniority, and the growing influe
of the school at the expense of the family, "the talented have been given
opportunity to rise to the level which accords with their capacities, and
lower classes consequently reserved for those who are also lower in abilit
In Young's world, a doctrinaire belief in equality collapsed in the face of t
practical advantages of an educational system that "no longer required t
clever to mingle with the stupid."

ame" in its normative projection sheds a great deal of light on trends in the
ed States, where a supremely democratic system of elite recruitment
s to result in far from democratic segregation of social classes, con-
pt for manual labor, collapse of the common schools, loss of a common
ire. As Young describes it, meritocracy has the effect of making elites more
re than ever in their privileges (which can now be seen as the appropriate
ard of diligence and brainpower) while nullifying working-class opposi-
. "The best way to defeat opposition," Young's historian observes, "is . . .
propriating and educating the best children of the lower classes while
are still young." Liberals and conservatives alike ignore the real objec-
to meritocracy—that it drains talent away from the lower classes and thus
ives them of effective leadership—and content themselves with dubious
ments to the effect that education does not live up to its promise of fos-
ng social mobility. If it did, they seem to imply, no one would presumably
e any reason to complain. Those who are left behind, knowing that "they
e had every chance," cannot legitimately complain about their
"For the first time in human history the interior man has no ready
ress for his self-regard." It should not surprise us, then, that
itocracy also generates an obsessive concern with "self-esteem."
new therapies (sometimes known collectively as the recovery
ement) seek to counter the oppressive sense of failure in those
fail to climb the educational ladder even while they leave in-
the existing structure of elite recruitment—the acquisition of ed-
ional credentials.

An aristocracy of talent is superficially an attractive ideal, which
ed to distinguish democracies from societies based on hered-
y privilege. Meritocracy, however, turns out to be a contradic-
in terms: the talented retain many of the vices of aristocracy
hout its virtues. Their snobbery lacks any acknowledgment of
procal obligations between the favored few and the multitude.
hough they are full of "compassion" for the poor, they cannot
aid to subscribe to a theory of noblesse oblige, which would im-
willingness to make a direct and personal contribution to the
lic good. Obligation, like everything else, has been deperson-
ed; exercised through the agency of the state, the burden of sup-
ting it falls not on the professional and managerial class but,
roportionately, on the lower middle and working classes. The policies
anced by new-class liberals on behalf of the downtrodden and oppressed—
al integration of the public schools, for example—require sacrifices from
the ethnic minorities who share the inner cities with the
poor, seldom from the suburban liberals who design and sup-
port those policies.

To an alarming extent, the privileged classes—by an expansive defi-
on, the top 20 percent—have made themselves independent not only of
nbling industrial cities but of public services in general. They send their
dren to private schools, insure themselves against medical emergencies
nrolling in company-supported plans, and hire private security guards to
ect themselves against the mounting violence. It is not just that they see
point in paying for public services they no longer use; many of them
e ceased to think of themselves as Americans in any important sense, im-
ated in America's destiny for better or worse. Their ties to an international
ure of work and leisure—of business, entertainment, information, and "in-
nation retrieval"—make many members of the elite deeply indifferent to
prospect of national decline.

The market in which the new elites operate is now international in scope.
ir fortunes are tied to enterprises that operate across national boundaries.
y are more concerned with the smooth functioning of the system as a whole
with any of its parts. Their loyalties—if the term is not itself anachro-
ic in this context—are international rather than regional, national, or lo-

IN AN ARISTOCRACY OF TALENT THE LATEST FORMS OF THE VICES OF ARISTOCRACY APPEAR WITHOUT ITS VIRTUES



Kong than with the masses of Americans not yet plugged in to the netw

In the borderless global economy, money has lost its links to nation; ty David Rieff, who spent several months in Los Angeles collecting materia fo his book *Los Angeles: Capital of the Third World*, reports that "at least tw o three times a week . . . I could depend on hearing someone say that thi ture 'belonged' to the Pacific Rim." The movement of money and pop tion across national borders has transformed the "whole idea of pla according to Rieff. The privileged classes in Los Angeles feel more kin with their counterparts in Japan, Singapore, and Korea than with most of t

The changing class structure of the United States mirrors changes that taking place all over the industrial world. In Europe, referenda on unifica have revealed a deep and widening gap between the political classes and more humble members of society, who fear that the European Economic C munity will be dominated by bureaucrats and technicians devoid of any ings of national identity or allegiance. Even in Japan, the very model successful industrialization in the last two or three decades, public-opinion p conducted in 1987 revealed a growing belief that the country could no lo be described as middle-class, ordinary people having failed to share in the fortunes accumulated in real estate, finance, and manufacturing.



Outside of the industrial democracies, with their increasing cial polarization, the global disparity between wealth and po ty has become so glaring that it is hardly necessary to review evidence of growing inequality. In Latin America, Africa, large parts of Asia, the sheer growth in numbers, together w the displacement of rural populations by the commercializat of agriculture, has subjected civic life to unprecedented stra Vast urban agglomerations—they can scarcely be called citie have taken shape, overflowing with poverty, wretchedness, ease, and despair. Paul Kennedy projects twenty of th "megacities" by 2025, each with a population of 11 millio more. Mexico City will already have more than 24 million habitants by the year 2000; São Paulo, more than 23 million; C cutta, 16 million; Bombay, 15.5 million. As the collapse of c life in these swollen cities continues, not only the poor but so the middle classes will experience conditions unimaginab few years ago. Middle-class standards of living can be expec to decline throughout what is all too hopefully referred t the developing world. In a country like Peru, once a prosper nation with reasonable prospects of evolving parliamentary stitutions, the middle class for all practical purposes has ceased to exis

A middle class, as Walter Russell Mead reminds us in his study of the climbing American empire, *Mortal Splendor*, "does not appear out of thin Its power and numbers "depend on the overall wealth of the domestic ec omy"; and in countries, accordingly, where "wealth is concentrated in hands of a tiny oligarchy and the rest of the population is desperately p the middle class can grow to only a limited extent. . . . [It] never escapes primary role as a servant class to the oligarchy." Unfortunately, this desc tion now applies to a growing list of nations that have prematurely reac the limits of economic development, countries in which a rising "share of t own national product goes to foreign investors or credito Such a tate may well await even industrial nations like United States.

The world of the late twentieth century thus presents a curious sp as it never was before. Capital and labor flow freely across political bou aries that seem increasingly artificial and unenforceable. Popular cult

ows in their wake. On the other hand, tribal loyalties have seldom been aggressively promoted. Religious and ethnic warfare breaks out in one country after another: in India and Sri Lanka, in large parts of Africa, in the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia.

is the weakening of the nation-state that underlies both these developments—the movement toward unification and the seemingly contradictory movement toward fragmentation. The state can no longer contain nic conflicts; nor can it contain the forces leading to globalization. Ideogically, nationalism comes under attack from both sides: from advocates thnic and racial particularism and also from those who argue that the onope of peace lies in the internationalization of everything from weights measures to the artistic imagination.

ears that the international language of money will speak more loudly n local dialects inspire the reassertion of ethnic particularism in Europe, le the decline of the nation-state weakens the only authority capable of ling ethnic rivalries in check. The revival of tribalism, in turn, reinforces active cosmopolitanism among elites. Curiously enough, it is Robert ch, notwithstanding his admiration for the new elite of "symbolic analysts," provides one of the most penetrating accounts of the "darker side of nopolitanism." Without national attachments, he reminds us, people e little inclination to make sacrifices or to accept responsibility for their ons. "We learn to feel responsible for others because we share with them mmon history . . . a common culture . . . a common fate." The denationalion of business enterprise tends to produce a class of cosmopolitans who themselves as "world citizens, but without accepting . . . any of the obliions that citizenship in a polity normally implies." But the cosmopolism of the favored few, because it is uninformed by the practice of citizenship, ns out to be a higher form of parochialism. Instead of supporting public ser-es, the new elites put their money into the improvement of their own -enclosed enclaves. They gladly pay for private and suburban schools, pri-e police, and private systems of garbage collection; but they have managed elieve themselves, to a remarkable extent, of the obligation to contribute he national treasury. Their acknowledgment of civic obligations does not end beyond their own immediate neighborhoods. The "secession of the symic analysts," as Reich calls it, provides us with a particularly striking instance he revolt of elites against the constraints of time and place.

The decline of nations is closely linked to the global decline of the middle s. It is the crisis of the middle class, and not simply the growing chasm been wealth and poverty, that needs to be emphasized in a sober analysis of prospects. Ever since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the fortunes he nation-state have been bound up with those of the trading and manturing classes. The founders of modern nations, whether they were exents of royal privilege like Louis XIV or republicans like Washington and yette, turned to this class for support in their struggle against the feudal ility. A large part of the appeal of nationalism lay in the state's ability to blish a common market within its boundaries, to enforce a uniform system of justice, and to extend citizenship both to petty proprietors and to rich chants, alike excluded from power under the old regime. The middle s understandably became the most patriotic, not to say jingoistic and milistic element in society. But the unattractive features of middle-class nanalism should not obscure its positive contributions in the form of a highly eloped sense of place and a respect for historical continuity—hallmarks of middle-class sensibility that can be appreciated more fully now that midclass culture is everywhere in retreat. Whatever its faults, middle-class nanalism provided a common ground, common standards, a common frame eference without which society dissolves into nothing more than contending ions, as the founding fathers of America understood so well. The revolt he masses that Ortega feared is no longer a plausible threat. But the revolt he elites against time-honored traditions of locality, obligation, and restraint y yet unleash a war of all against all. ■

WITHOUT [illegible] STANDARDS AND A FRAME OF REFERENCE, DISSOLVES INTO NOTHING THAN CONTENDING FACT

CALIFORNIA'S ELECTED ANARCHY

A government destroyed by popular referendum

By Peter Schrag

California presents the promise and challenge contained at the very heart of the American dream; here, probably more than at any other place or time, the shackles of the past are broken. In helping to create the society of the future, a man is limited only by the strength of his ambition, the dimension of his concern and the depth of his courage to face the dangers of his own creation.

George B. Leonard,
Look magazine, 1962

By now the image of California in decline [illegible] as conventional [illegible] wisdom as the Golden State–triumphant clichés of a generation ago—"this El Dorado," as *Time* magazine [illegible] 1960, that was to be "the mirror of America as it will become." Hardly anyone mentions the sunshine these days, or the beaches, or the beautiful young families around the pool, or the new lifestyles that all America will soon emulate, or how the University of California [illegible] Fulbright and Nobel laureates, or how the state's higher-education system is accommodating absolutely all comers [illegible].

Today, California classrooms are among the [illegible] in the country; [illegible] operate without libraries, without counselors, without nurses, without art or music, with greatly [illegible] and [illegible] rather [illegible] and [illegible] no powerful constituencies: children's protective [illegible] Philadelphia Museum [illegible] have shut down swimming and wading pools because they cannot be safely maintained, [illegible] fenced playgrounds have been shut because [illegible] the danger presented by cracked and splinte[illegible] structures. Some counties have closed their p[illegible] hic hospitals and their mental-health facili[illegible] creating more work for the police. In Me[illegible] County, lack of funds compelled the supervi[illegible] last December to vote to close all of the cou[illegible] nineteen public libraries, although volunt[illegible] and donations—from public employees, f[illegible] waitresses giving a portion of their tips—are m[illegible] aging to keep them open three days a week. In [illegible] capital city of Sacramento, the central publi[illegible] brary manages to stay open barely thirty-[illegible] hours a week and is never open after 6:00 [illegible] some branches are open no more than a co[illegible] of days a week. The library in Tulare County [illegible] year sent out appeals for donations with the p[illegible] erty-tax bills. And in some rural counties, th[illegible] braries have shut down altogether.

The list could be extended indefinitely. [illegible] thousands of professors receive golden ha[illegible] shakes from the University of California [illegible] California State University, among them som[illegible] the stars recruited in the go-go Fifties, the cro[illegible] ng in the lecture halls has increased and [illegible] lines at the classroom door have gotten lo[illegible] and longer ("Don't panic," says the T-shirt [illegible] student waiting to enroll at a Sacramento [illegible] nior college, but many have been in line s[illegible] four in the morning). U.C. tuition, which [illegible] roughly $800 a year in the early 1980s, is [illegible] over $4,000, a figure not out of line with [illegible] itions at public colleges in other states but a[illegible] cry from the cost of a California state educa[illegible] in the golden days—and it is almost certain to [illegible] crease again next year. More than 200,000 [illegible] dents—roughly 10 percent—have vanished f[illegible]

olls of the state's colleges and universities in past two years. And while scores of local munities have mustered majority votes in t of proposed bond issues or small property overrides for everything from public safety to ols, most votes have fallen short of the two- ds majority the law requires.

eanwhile, it seems increasingly likely that the e will spend almost nothing on road and tree improvements once this month's election is r. Because it refused porarily to tax itself for cost of last January's quake repairs, the state rnment may have to d every cent it allocat- or roads on the cost, ed with the federal gov- nent, of rebuilding and tting damaged struc- s. When the ax began ll in July on some of most urgent freeway im- ements, the howl from motorists forced Gov- r Pete Wilson, who was in a tough reelection ll, to beat a temporary at. His administration nounced that it would re a short-term loan to ue the projects at until after the elec-



While per capita tax rev- es have been effective- frozen, and while they e declined relative to r states, client rolls for e services—schools, prisons, Medicaid, wel- —have been rising faster than population, ating a structural gap that no one has yet con- ed, much less closed. Again this year the rnor and legislature borrowed $7 billion from s and rolled over a $5 billion budget deficit, hich few politicians have proposed any reme- . Thanks to the deficit, California, which a de ago had one of the highest bond ratings in ountry, now has one of the lowest. "We're Cal- ia a corporation," said John Vasconcellos, chairman of the State Assembly Ways and ns Committee, "it would have little op- tion but to initiate some sort of bank- ruptcy proceeding."

The new image of California is familiar ugh: a state suffering from earthquakes, fires, ght, floods, urban riots, dirty air, schools as owded as the freeways, a legislature once to be the nation's most professional and pro- gressive —oozing with corruption and stuck in budgetary gridlock, and, of course, recession-era employment, chronic budget deficits, and financial calamity.

For those who know their Nathanael West, their Raymond Chandler, and their Joan Didion, the California apocalypse imagery is hardly new; it was always there on the dark side of the dream. This was the place, as Didion wrote back in the 1960s, "in which a boom mentality and a sense of Chekhovian loss meet in uneasy suspension; in which the mind is troubled by some buried but ineradicable suspicion that things had better work here, because here, beneath that immense bleached sky, is where we run out of continent." Los Angeles has burned before.

If you believe people like Governor Wilson, most of the state's problems were created somewhere else, usually in Washington, where the Clinton Administration has, on the one hand, cost California hundreds of thousands of jobs through excessive defense cuts and, on the other, allowed a horde of illegal immigrants to overrun the state's schools and health facilities without paying for the immense costs that come with them. A few days after last January's earthquake in the San Fernando Valley, Republican Assemblywoman Paula Boland (then sleeping in her car because her home had been damaged) argued that the federal government should be paying for all the quake damage, every cent of it, because "the Pres-

ing, Jarvis, who represented an associatio
apartment-house owners, and his sometim
ner, Paul Gann, a former car salesman an
estate agent who had founded an organiz
called People's Advocate in the 1960s, hi
up to organize the campaign for the mothe
tax-revolt initiatives. Proposition 13, or Jar
Gann, sharply reduced local property taxe
effectively destroyed the
ment to raise ad valorem taxes. Under Pro
tion 13, the maximum rate of property tax
which had averaged just over 2.5 percent
sessed value, was limited to 1 percent, exclu
any outstanding bonded debt or debt alrea
curred; the assessed value of all propert
rolled back to 1975 values and was allowed
crease no more than 2 percent a year unless
is a change in ownership. (Over
local property taxes were reduc
an average of 57 percent.) For
local bodies had possessed the
to raise other taxes on their own; P
sition 13 now required a vote
people—in some instances, a ma
vote; in others, a two-thirds vote—in or
levy new taxes or to increase taxes designat
a special purpose.

Most important, by assigning to the sta
duty of determining how the revenues fro
1 percent of permissible property taxation s
be divided—how much for the city, how
for the schools, how much for the mosq
abatement district, how much for the flood
trol district—Proposition 13 all but dest
the fiscal power of local government and m
it to Sacramento. In a state of more than 30
lion people, the legislature and governor hav
come the arbiters of local priorities. But the
arbiters with little authority. Proposition 1
call, no longer permits the legislature to
most taxes by a simple majority—a two-t
vote is now required. This would be diff
enough, even if California were not one o
in each house of the legislature is required
to enact a state budget or approve a simple
propriation. That provision, introduced int
California constitution in the 1930s, made
difference when the state was growing, whe
cal government was relatively free to funct
and when, as the great California booste
George Harris put it thirty years ago, Calif
was "short on oppressed minorities [and bre
ing] the heady confidence of the postwar bo
But once money got tight, and once the s
started to become perceptibly black, brown,
yellow and as divided on social issues as
now, the two-thirds vote put a veto in the h
of every determined political minority that w
to assert itself in Sacramento. Since 1978, t

a 1921 fire in the Oakland hills or the San
in the first trial, before the eight-year drought that
still may not be over. And contrary to what most
Californians believe, a lot of the damage didn't

... HAVE ATTEMPTED TO REPLACE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT WITH GOVERNMENT BY AUTOPILOT

just happen to us: we inflicted it on ourselves by popular vote in a series of chimerical "reforms" going back to the 1970s and maybe earlier. Those reforms—most, though not all, by the initiative route—have crippled state and local governments with so many limits and mandates and so tangled responsibility that it is increasingly difficult for representative government to function at all and nearly impossible for even well-informed people to know who's accountable for what. In effect, Californians, pursuing visions of governmental perfection, have made it increasingly difficult for elected officials to make any rational policy decisions. And therein lies a cautionary tale for all those other Americans pursuing constitutional spending limits, balanced-budget amendments, super-requirements, term limits, and the various other mechanisms designed to replace representative government in America with government by autopilot.

Howard Jarvis, who died in 1986, had more than his initials in common with the man who brought the initiative and referendum to California some eighty years ago, Hiram Johnson. Jarvis and Johnson were both populist hustlers who could parlay a grievance into a cause large enough to change the political landscape. But it

ally been the "Proposition 13 babies," the
servative Republicans in the State Assembly
once proudly called themselves "cavemen"
who, because they control more than one
rd of the votes, have become the holy
rdians of the tax revolt.

Even now, it's still hard to fully assess the sea
shift that Proposition 13 wrought in Cali-
nia politics. Jarvis-Gann was not a single event



the start of a vicious cycle of reform and
stration: it was written into the constitution
978; spending limits, permitting government
raise expenditures by no more than the in-
ase in the population and the cost of living,
re enacted by a Gann-sponsored initiative
ice modified) the following year; in the ear-
980s came initiatives indexing the income tax
abolishing the state inheritance tax. In re-
ion to the constraints of Jarvis-Gann, the
ers, led by the potent California Teachers
sociation, in 1988 passed Proposition 98,
ich requires at least 40 percent of the state's
neral fund to go to schools. Legislative term
its—six years for the Assembly and eight for
Senate—and sharp cuts in legislative staff and
dget were passed in 1990. In addition, there has
n an ooze of "trailer" bills and ballot measures
that, among other things, allow
property taxes at the rate frozen at 19
their homes on to their children
assessment, thus creating what may be A
first dynastic privileges since the
primogeniture.

At every level, California is hamstrung by su-
permajority requirements. In this cycle of reform
ribution, in which we shoot ourselves in the foot

again and again, every reform puts more restraints on state and local governments, thereby making it still harder for elected officials to solve problems or agree on budgets, which in turn leads to yet another "reform." And the cycle isn't over. California has two biggies on this month's ballot. The first is SOS (Save Our State), an initiative that would exclude all illegal aliens from the public schools and deny them all but emergency medical aid. The school ban is almost certainly unconstitutional; the Supreme Court rejected a similar law in 1982. But that hardly diminishes its chances for passage. The other is a three-strikes-and-you're-out prison sentencing initiative (the last strike need not be a violent felony) that would put an identical law already enacted by the legislature beyond reasonable possibility of legislative repeal, thus



and exemptions from regulation or for a

voters have been faced with dueling initiati

one could have predicted.

The same is true at the local level. Last

a coalition of cultural groups in Fresno—h

symphony, the library, the art museum, the z

persuaded the legislature to pass a bill allow

people in that city to vote on a local sales-ta

crease of one tenth of one cent for suppo

community arts groups. But since Jarvis-Gan

quires a two-thirds majority if the money go

any government entity, the money flows

special "district" that is not quite concur

with any political jurisdiction and t

run by, and accountable to, a board

resenting thirteen government and

organizations. Incredibly, it passed

And then there's Jerry Meral,

may be in a class by himself. In 1

Meral, a former official in Jerry Bro

administration who now heads the

ifornia Planning and Conservat

League, put together a $776 million p

bond measure by logrolling deals

local environmental groups: in re

for so many signatures, or so much

ey to get the measure on the ball

favorite project—a wildlife preserv

new piece of parkland, a bird refug

parcel of land for a city park—woul

included. There were howls in the

islature when the thing passed; this

tantamount to buying legislation, it

said, and laws were promptly passe

stop Meral, although his bond mea

was hardly different from what mos

them were doing. Meral had sim

made himself a private legislature.

deterred, in 1990 Meral, with $500,

from the Southern Pacific Railroad,

the prime villain of populist politic

California, organized a $1.9 billion public-tra

portation-bond initiative (from which, need

to say, the S.P. had a lot to gain) and got it pas

by a safe majority. Since neither of these pie

of ballot-box budgeting provided for any

funds—Meral promotes his projects as if t

were free—they draw a couple of hundred mill

more each year from the state's ravaged treas

(Last June, he managed to put yet another p

bond on the ballot, a $2 billion whopper for so

400 park and wildlife projects all over the stat

including one $2 million refuge for Califor

migratory birds in Central America—but it s

cumbed to the state's increasingly surly econo

ic mood in an election in which no bonds passe

larence Lo, a sociologist now at the Uni-
ity of Missouri who studied the tax revolt
d interviewed hundreds of Proposition 13
ers in the days after its passage, talks about
pleased they were that ordinary citizens
d take on government and win. But the
outcome is precisely the opposite. Al-
gh there are always deals to be cut and fa-
to be sold, government as a whole—which
complicated enough before in such areas as
tion, water policy, and insurance—has be-
e nearly incomprehensible to both citizens
legislators. Few understand the bizarre tan-
of special districts created to cope with the
's spending and tax limits; those who do are
ly to be government technicians and lob-
yts. And as term limits drive the last long-
n veterans out of legislative office, the
ess will be complete. There might have
n a time when term-limited legislators could
e understood state government in the short
allotted to them. But not this government.
the 1982 off-year primary in Cal-
nia, 37 percent of the eligible voters
ned out, a terrible showing by the
dards of the time. This June, in a
ilar primary, 27 percent turned out,
le than half of whom were over fifty.
it does not reflect any general apa-
about government: turnouts in presidential
tions, in which things seem comprehensible,
e remained constant. But for those who dream
ut some form of high-tech direct democracy
ntasize about the citizen legislators that term
ts will produce, that low turnout ought to be
ning enough; the more the people try to take
esentative government into their own hands,
the more incapable they become
as citizens.

Even before the passage of Proposition 13
978, California's capital spending for the
struction of schools, universities, highways,
water systems—once among the prime ex-
ts of California as the latter-day El Dora-
–had begun to decline. California's great
od of public investment came in the 1950s
1960s; by the mid-1970s, the public-spend-
boom was over, the university's sanctity had
en punctured by student protest, and envi-
mentalists were talking as loudly about smog,
er pollution, and resource conservation as
ers had once spoken about the construction
hools, freeways, dams, and aqueducts.

As governors, both Ronald Reagan the con-
ative and Jerry Brown the flaky liberal clob-
ed the state's public universities and civil
ants. By 1988, Brown's Republican successor,
orge Deukmejian, was suggesting the same
-budget transportation expedients—car-
pooling, diamond lanes, staggered work, and
commuter hours—that Brown and his critics
were derided for only a few years before. In less
than a generation, California, land of the Auto
Triumphant, went to last among the states in
per capita highway spending. And whereas spend-
ing as a percentage of personal income had been
running about 15 percent above the national
average in the heady 1960s, by 1990, before the
California recession began, it was just barely at
the national average and well below the average
for the other major industrial states.

California, in short, turned toward public-sec-
tor mediocrity long before the post–Cold War de-
fense cuts, at a time when California's
defense-driven economy was booming. In 1974,
just before the big run-up in property values,
Californians spent 14 percent of personal in-
come on state and local taxes. By 1989 that had
declined to 11.4 percent. (Although Wilson,
trying to close a $14 billion deficit, has since
agreed to $7.5 billion in sales- and income-tax in-

THE MORE THE PEOPLE TRY TO TAKE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT INTO THEIR OWN HANDS, THE MORE INCAPABLE THEY BECOME AS CITIZENS

creases, that was not nearly enough to make up
for the estimated $16 billion per year lost be-
cause of the tax cuts.)

Joel Fox, the Massachusetts transplant who's
headed the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Associa-
tion since 1986, when the old man died, claims—
probably correctly—that when fees are added to
state and local taxes, California is spending as
much now per capita as it did before Proposition
13, though state and local taxes are still far low-
er (twenty-fourth in the nation) as a percentage
of per capita income. Fox sardonically remarks
that Proposition 13 has been blamed for every-
thing from measles epidemics (because of cuts in
public-health budgets) to the kidnapping and
murder of Polly Klaas last year (because of cuts
in budgets for police communications equip-
ment). Proposition 13, he says, "was not a vote
of selfishness and racism; it was not an act of
generational warfare." It was a vote for stability:
"For the first time, it was the taxpayer who had
certainty rather than the tax collector."

But the certainty was bought at an enormous
cost. California is now spending its scarce rev-
enues not through a comprehensible legislative
process in which priorities are evaluated against
one another but through a crazy quilt of ad hoc
decisions that frustrates healthy development
and defies rational budgeting, intelligent policy
formulation, and civic comprehension. Devas-
tating as the impact of Proposition 13 on public

discourages conversion to more productive uses.

sales taxes) rather than manufacturing plants

recently went all-out to get a Price Club store

that Datatape, until recently a subsidiary of Eastman Kodak, was considering for the site. Datatape, it explained, would bring high-paying jobs, but it would cost as much in city services as it would reap in revenues. This was not the way to maintain the quality of services that residents in Monrovia wanted. The other hand, "would have paid for itself many times over." Gould acknowledged that all this "cash-box zoning" was a game of beggar-thy-neighbor in which there was no net gain. But until the whole structure is re- alternative.

Worse, cities and counties, prompted by lagging property taxes to impose increasingly high developer fees and other exactions for freeway interchanges, roads, sewers, and schools, have shifted costs for services and improvements from the general community to new developments and businesses. And they have imposed these costs at the front end, when businesses can least afford them, rather than taxing the businesses' increasing worth as they become profitable or re- those who benefit from those improvements, to pay their share. "If local governments thought growth would bring amenities like libraries or museums, they'd act differently," says Lenny Goldberg, a liberal political ture for more than a decade. "But with Proposi- with, they don't see the benefits." Proposition 13, claims Bill Fulton, who studies local planning and devel- the city treasury from the local economy. "The outlet mall in Oxnard—that's what most California cities now mean by economic development. What they're trying to do is steal sales taxes from

The ugly new expedients that cities, coun- to keep their operations running—regressive

roads, freeway interchanges, sewers, park- mulatively they have produced distortion least among them the fact that housing in pay a large share of the front-loaded costs most common estimate is that fees and regu delays easily add between $10,000 and $5 to the cost of the average new home, mak still harder for the state to encourage expan or to attract industry and the young workers pends on. Under these conditions, almo community wants middle- or low-income ing: it costs too much in services and return little in taxes.

Another side effect of Proposition 13 has grossly unequal tax assessments on othe similar middle-class homeowners. Becaus law rolled assessments back to 1975 value won't allow property to be reassessed unt sold, there are thousands of nearly iden parcels, often located next to each other—h and businesses—whose owners pay vast ferent taxes depending on when they bought. A few years ago, Macy's, conte that Proposition 13 was discriminatory an tifying to new business, moved to take the to the U.S. Supreme Court. But when the ites started sending in their shredded credit cards, Macy's abandoned the case. mately, in a suit brought by a first-time Lo geles homeowner, Stephanie Nordlinger was paying $1,700 in property taxes whi neighbors in nearly identical tract houses paying between $400 and $500, the Cour that Proposition 13 furthered a legitimate cy goal—"neighborhood preservation" an bility"—and thus was not a violation equal-protection clause. A would-be home on notice of the tax consequences, can decide not to buy, Justice Blackmun wrote Court in *Nordlinger v. Hahn* (1992), but a sting owner, already saddled with his pur does not have the option of deciding not his home if taxes become prohibitively Nothing could better illustrate the bias new California.

Except, perhaps, the condition of the schools. California, among the top ten st per-pupil spending for schools in 1969, i roughly fortieth, despite the requirem Proposition 98 that 40 percent of the state get must go to schools. California now spen holt for each child in the public schools, ly $4,200 a year, what New York or New spends. Almost everything that Jonathan attributes to the "savage inequalities" of fu for inner-city schools in Illinois or New Je

York is true about schools everywhere in fornia: the leaky roofs, the broken windows, dry rot and peeling paint, the bathrooms are locked because the plumbing has failed, 'temporary" portable classrooms that have n there for thirty years. At Berkeley High ool, the gutters fall from the eaves; in Lyn- , a teacher falls through the rotten floor of high school; at San Juan High School in rban Sacramento, to quote a news report, lents [on their way to a chemistry class] pass ugh hallways that seem like subterranean nels: dark and damp, with a few puddles on concrete floor . . . the old heating pipes run- beneath the room generate steam that buck- he floor and gives the [room] a constant fouse atmosphere. The windows teamed and the textbooks are warp- ' In Sacramento, there is one high- ool counselor for every 2,000 ents: "I do [college counseling]," one, "after school, at night, when fit it in, for large groups of students parents." California school libraries have s predicting that someday men will reach the n.

its optimistic heyday, during the early 0s, California described itself as a place of rful professionals with young families. By , the typical voter—the Jarvis-Gann voter lked about himself as a middle-aged home- er, often a retiree, who could no longer af- the property taxes generated by the inflated fornia real-estate values of the mid-1970s. s it was no accident that the movement's ers, Howard Jarvis and Paul Gann, were a of elderly curmudgeons: its members were roportionately older, white, affluent voters se children were grown and no longer de- lent on the services—schools, parks, play- unds, libraries—that the property tax tionally supported. (It has been estimated between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s, ercentage of voters who had children in the ic schools dropped from 40 percent to 20 ent.)

or was it entirely coincidence that Proposi- 13 passed just as the state's school popula- was becoming predominantly nonwhite (it w more than 55 percent Latino, Asian, and). Many of those children come from sin- arent families, from families where little ish is spoken, and from poor families that not to vote. Jarvis and Gann plumbed Cal- ia's growing disconnection between those vote and those who use public services—or the Wilson Administration came to de- e as the gap between the taxpayers and the sers. *Our* playgrounds and schools had be- *their* playgrounds and schools.

In *then* schools, the effects of Jarvis-Gann are particularly noticeable. Because local school boards no longer have authority to raise taxes and nearly all the money now comes from the state, the civic and business groups that were once deeply involved in education—the people from the taxpayer groups, the chamber of commerce types, the old middle-class good-government reformers, or "goo-goos"—have lost interest in running for office. They have left a vacuum for creationists and various other true believers on the one hand and, on the other, for public-employee groups that are vitally concerned with how tax money is spent, particularly in how much goes on the bargaining table.

This is especially true in the big-city California school districts, where the unions are now the only large source of campaign money and union-backed candidates dominate the boards. Five years ago, shortly after a bitter Los Angeles teachers' strike resulted in a 24 percent three-year pay increase that the already strapped system couldn't afford, the most vocal opponent of the settlement was defeated for reelection by a twenty-seven-year-old unknown named Mark Slavkin, whose most visible attribute was his union backing. Meanwhile, a strong supporter of the contract was reelected, also with union support. "The message," said Wayne Johnson, who was then the union's president, "is you better listen to us or you are in political trouble." In any given year, according to the California Teachers Association, better than 70 percent of CTA-backed candidates are elected. That clout hasn't prevented strikes and public-employee slowdowns in the state's major cities—"We're electing more," said one union official, "and enjoying it less"—but it has consistently shaved programs in favor of salaries. Despite the state's desperate finances, California's public employees—teachers, prison guards, cops, firefighters—are, except for Alaska's, the highest-paid in the nation, and California's progress toward privatization of public services is among the slowest.

IN THIS PARODY OF THE FAMILIAR THEORY OF CONSTITUTIONAL CHECKS AND BALANCES, GOVERNMENT IS NOT REALLY SUPPOSED TO WORK

More and more we are creating the institutions of a society divided between the very rich and the very poor. As state services become increasingly dependent on non-tax revenues—higher tuition for the universities, growing reliance on private funding in affluent local school systems, sharply higher entrance fees for parks and pools, high developer and permit fees on new con-

health, education, recreation —

California's current impatience with

old against the young; white against minority; taxpayer, as the Wilson Administration has de-

A decade ago we spent three times as much on higher education as we did on prisons, roughly 13 percent of the state budget as compared with 4 percent. Now the spending, at 8 to 9 percent for each, is almost even.

In the 1960s, California, with typical hyperbole, celebrated effective modern government, high public purpose, and social investment. The running refrain of the past two decades is its opposite: disinvestment, gridlock, and a degenerative cycle in which autopilot solutions chase the mirages of reform. The state still attracts—and industry than any other place in the country. And even liberals like Lenny Goldberg acknowledge that the constraints of the tax revolt may have made some government operations more efficient. "Government in California has become leaner in its operations," he has written, "and while services have suffered, overhead expenditures were the first to go."

But what brought most of the jobs that are now vanishing, other than the sunshine and the federal government, was well-funded public services — education in particular. As a string of think-tank reports now point out, California suffers from what the Washington-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities calls "a long-term investment deficit." Until that deficit is reduced, which in turn requires a return of confidence in government itself, there's no chance that the state can recapture the vitality of the Fifties and Sixties. In July, when Wall Street again lowered California's bond rating, the bond houses and investor services bluntly pointed to the con-

which have limited flexibility and

and universities are at least as important

A small but growing number of people

academics, business

tives, even some politicians—have start

recognize the dangers and to propose rem

applying the sales tax to services; creating

roll under which business and commercia

erty would be assessed at levels more nearl

to its real value; allowing school districts

bonds, as most other states do, with just a m

vote and permitting school-tax increases wh

a vote of the people; eliminating the accum

loopholes that have been written into the

tax code, itself a unique problem in Calif

where tax breaks can be approved by simp

jorities but, because they are tax "increases"

be abolished only by a two-thirds majority

spring the legislature, with Pete Wilson's

ed concurrence, created a constitutiona

sion commission that is looking at every

from unicameralism to a complete (and

rational) rearrangement of state-local rel

There is an embryonic Public Policy In

of California, recently created by a $70 m

gift from Silicon Valley industrialist W

Hewlett. And there are repeated warning

the state's legislative analyst, whose ow

has been decimated by budget cuts, that

fornia's structural deficit is out of control.

are even those who believe that the only so

is a parliamentary system headed by a g

nor–cum–prime minister, which would,

again, remind people that government c

and that those acts have consequences.

however, no major politician, certainl

Pete Wilson or his Democratic opponent

month's election, State Treasurer Katl

Brown, has been willing to call for the dis

tling of the barriers to effective governme

tion and public spending for which Jarvis-

is still a sacred symbol.

For the foreseeable future, then, Calif

will remain locked into a system of supern

ity government that makes a parody of the

ory of constitutional checks and bala

government's not really supposed to work,

it does, it should work only slowly and only

there is almost unanimous agreement. M

tory-sentencing laws, redundant regulator

tems, spending limits, spending mandates,

limits, balanced-budget amendments, supe

jority budgeting, requirements that every

levy get the approval of voters—the purp

all of these measures is to replace city co

members, legislators, and judges with a Ne

tan machine immune to any significant co

or judgment by elected representatives. Thi

only turns democracy into some fun-house

tortion of the ideal but makes it nearly imp

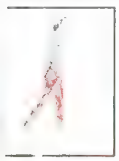
ble to govern at all.

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KING OF THE SKY

By Roxana Robinson

I

lets, our various selves. There was Gilbert's sleek and dressy herring-

coat, my own gray raincoat, my velvet collared black Chesterfield. No bright colors, nothing exciting, but everything was well-made, clean, looked after. Among the others I

wool loden coat that I wore all winter to the supermarket, to the museum, to the Development Office, and on the twice-

m, Jocko, take off your

is eight, didn't an

and aiming his

the distance. His eyes were too

The fantasies of boys in second grade are almost entirely violent. Mayhem and death lie at their cores, and all require the powerful and satisfying sound of an explosion. This noise is something all boys can produce. It begins at the moment of detonation: the cheeks balloon slightly, and a deep gargle at the back of the throat produces a muted rumble. The lips part to allow the sound loose into the world, and the vibrating root of the tongue and the arched root of the palate produce a series of slow reverberations. The echoes continue deep in the throat, distant and sinister. Their majestic pace, their diminishing volume, their final lapsing into an elegiac silence all suggest the end of everything. Eight-year-old boys need to suggest — particularly to their mothers — their dangerous capacity to end everything.

I knelt on the rug next to Jock. Ignoring me, he leaned on the chair seat and sighted along his extended finger, one eye closed for accuracy. I faced the pale clear skin of his cheek, the faint purple delta of veins at his temple, the translucent whorl of his ear.

I began easing his boots off. Jock allowed this, stretching out each leg in turn for me to grasp, but he continued to ignore me. It was as

or cooperation with this large domestic female would have destroyed the secret, other, real life that Jock had so carefully created. I didn't insist on recognition. I didn't care. As long as Jock allowed our worl function peaceably side by side occasionally to interlock, I d complain. I had other parts life besides the part that conta him, why shouldn't Jock? An him, it was an impo matter, his independ

When our things were off got on the elevator. We were g up to the twelfth floor, to Willie, one of Jock's best frie and Willie's mother, Margaret, of my best friends. Our building a safe one, and no one locked daytime. On twelve I pushed their heavy front door and calle to the empty hall.

"Hello! We're here."

"In the kitchen," Margaret c back.

Jock set off at a run. I aml more slowly down the long h lined hall, through the big sq dining room with its mahog table. Margaret's apartment was ger than ours, a duplex, with a race outside the living room.

In the large white kitchen M garet was sitting on the tiled f next to Willie, wrestling with on his boots. Margaret was neat short, with glossy brown hair li cap. She worked nearly full time lobbyist for an environmental gr and she was still dressed for the fice. She was in a dark-green, lo sleeved buttoned-up blouse black pants: very elegant. Marg always looked elegant in a quiet Elegance is in the details. bl

e shoes, a high silk collar, a full
l chain. Margaret liked details,
she was good at them. I'd heard
was brilliant at work; lobbying
as taking charge, planning strat
, changing people's minds. It
r she was assertive and effec
I admired her for that, they
things I was not.
illie was Margaret's only child;
always said she couldn't manage
any more. He looked just like
with the same pale skin, round
n eyes, and sleek cap of hair.
peramentally, however, they
e fiercely opposed:
garet demanded order,
ie, chaos.
illie was lying on his
propped up on one
w. He was using his
l as a fighter plane
making jet-engine
es. Jock ran over to
with an eight-year-
g a t, haphazard and
ning. As he reached
llie, Jock knelt and
ded to a stop on his
es, his hands on his
ns. Willie gave him a
long glance and went
with the air war. Nei-
spoke.
Hi, Margaret," I said
Willie."
Willie ignored me, his
ed-out cheeks full of
d.
would have ignored
gnoring, but at once
garet said, "Willie,
hello to Mrs. Nelson."
illie did not look at her. He
e more powerful jet-engine
es and set his plane on a danger-
ourse past his shoulder.
Willie," Margaret said again
ie ignored her. His eyes were
l on his hand, which was aerody
ically flattened, and his fingers
split into wings. His engines
ed, reaching a higher and higher
e.
Willie," Margaret said ominously.
Don't worry about it," I said,
ing I hadn't said hello to Willie
e first place. But now Margaret
red me.
Willie!" Margaret said again, her
voice peremptory. Willie heard her
the end of the next roaring period.
He looked up at me for a split sec
ond.
"Hi," he said, not quite insolent,
his eyes flicking off my face at once.
His voice returned to combustion
engines.
"Hello, Mrs. *Nelson*," Margaret
said.
"Mrs. Nelson," Willie added airily
to his flying hand.
Margaret shook her head, her lips
tight. She looked at me grimly.
"We've been having a wonderful
time today. We're in such a good
mood," she said.
Margaret's views about boys were
different from mine, and Willie's re-
sistance was driving her crazy. Of
course, Willie's resistance might
have driven me crazy too. There
seemed to be something manic
about Willie, something locked and
frantic and driven. He lunged to-
ward crazy, and then so did Mar-
garet. They goaded each other on.
The more each insisted, the more
the other resisted; and though their
goals were different, their methods
were the same. They seemed some-
times like two halves of the same
fierce and indomitable personality,
[illegible]
[illegible]
Watching them
this was just a phas
when Willie became
Margaret would
Once he was free
could return to her
would encourage Willie to
his. She would admire his inde
dence and support his outrageity
could pull back, and he would relax
thought that could happen. All this
conflict seemed temporary; they
would just have to live through it.
Now Margaret yanked at
Willie's second boot.
Willie, loose-limbed, un-
involved, came along with
his foot and was pulled
smoothly toward her on
his back. Jock had joined
him on the floor, and at
Willie's involuntary slither
they both began to laugh.
But Margaret didn't even
smile. She ignored them,
sliding her hand inside the
boot and finally worming
out the foot. Her face was
dark and her mouth set, as
though the resistance of
the boot, the tactile cling
between rubber and leath-
er, was Willie's fault, part
of his stubbornness.
She pulled the boot off
at last and shook her head.
"God!" she said, and put
the boot side by side next
to the wall. She stood up,
wiped her hands on her
black pants, and smiled at me.
"Sorry," she said briskly, and
moved over to the bigger train.
"It's all airplanes here this week;
we're all pilots. Willie's King of the
Sky," Margaret said, turning on the
flame beneath the kettle. "I don't
know why. Before that we had police
shoot-outs and drug runners, but
suddenly it's all airplanes. Do you
have airplanes, or is it only us?"
"We're a mix," I said. "We have
some comic-book heroes, airplanes,
and a lot of spaceships."
"I'm glad we're not Exterminators
anymore, anyway," said Margaret.
"*Exterminators!*" Willie [illegible]
from the [illegible]

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"A fat chance anyway, Termina-

Margaret. "They'd all want one."

She fixed tea for us and soup and at the butcher-block table. The boys er. They were involved in something, staring intently and mirthfully into each other's eyes as they ate. In the next room, Pasita, Margaret's Colombian housekeeper, was doing the laundry. We could hear the machine, and the faster, ringing sound of the dryer. Outside it was cold and windy, but in there the air was steamy and warm, and it felt entirely safe.

I grew up in New York, on East Eighty-first Street. Some things haven't changed since I was little. The school uniforms are the same, and the sight of all the children walking home with their mothers along upper Park Avenue, the girls' fine hair in messy braids, their socks drooping around their ankles, the little boys with blue blazers and brightly colored knapsacks, the doormen keeping a watchful eye on them. Doormen still use their authority and will call out sternly to a group of rowdy boys, "That's enough, now! Settle down," as they pass noisy eye them and do not answer. They do, for the moment, settle down. They know that they are part of a neighborhood, that their parents have friends in that building, that they are part of a watchful, strict, benevolent network that protects its children.

But that network only works inside itself. Outside, the world is large and threatening, and our children are at risk in ways I was not. When I was little, accidents were the gravest danger to children. There was that time, a tacit agreement am grown-ups that children were t cherished. Strangers risked t lives to save other people's chil pulling them heroically from b ing houses, out of rivers and w That has changed. Now a stra approaching a child is an en children are targets. Now there grown-ups and teenagers who h children, deliberately. That fa always, always, at the back of mind.

When Jock was five, he and I a fight. He stood in the hall ou his room and yelled up at me, a s fiery figure in brown corduroy p and a striped cotton jersey, his ping-off socks dragging beyond toes. He shouted that he hated and I shouted back that I didn't c I was outraged that he should c lenge me, and I towered angrily him. My huge hands on my wide powerful hips mimicked and culed him, his small hands set br ly on his narrow hips.

"I don't care that you don't c he finished shrilly, and whirled from me. He stalked angrily int room and slammed the door. stamped his feet with each step, in socks, on the carpet, his small made only faint thuds.

I went into the kitchen to c down, and a few minutes later appeared in the doorway. He wearing shoes and his yellow sli The peaked hood was pulled up his head, casting a deep glow shadow over his face.

"I'm running away," he nounced.

I was no longer angry; I was r to make up. I looked at him, small defiant figure, and I was st by how powerless he was. Chil have control over nothing in t lives; everything is determined b who claim to have their best i ests at heart. But who's to s We have our own best interest heart, as always: self-esteem, auth ty, convenience. It seems so u to these tiny people, who stand u us so bravely, who struggle so ha be real, to make us know that are real.

I said, "All right."

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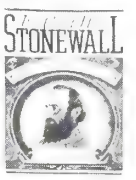
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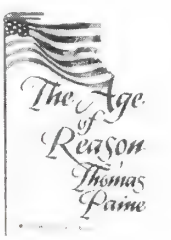
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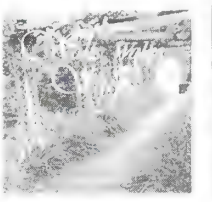


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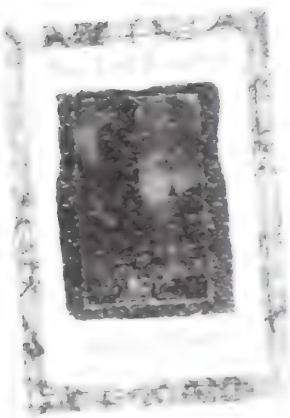
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Jock stood still, uncertain.

"Forever," he warned.

He had thought I would argue watched me carefully, for a trick a second thought.

"If you want to run away, you I can't stop you," I said docilely. don't forget you aren't allowe cross the street."

"I know that," he said defia He still watched me, and I smil him.

"I love you," I added, and at he regained his dignity and tu proudly away. He walked to the door. I stood in the doorway waved as he got into the elev his arms crossed on his chest, h flaws cradled in his palms, jacked hood shading his small face.

What I should have done w low him, I know that now. I sh have gone down right after hi the next elevator. I should shadowed him around the bl stepping quickly into doorw when Jock turned around. But I some notion of playing fair, a thought I should not invade his venture.

Instead, I went to the win and leaned out, the sidewalk be drawing me dizzyingly towar There weren't many people on block, and no one else was slicker: it wasn't raining. I c easily see the small yellow fig the pointed hood—which he always refused to wear before— dressed upward, to me. He walking slowly, for someone such a fierce purpose, and I w dered if the world now seemed er, noisier, more arbitrary, than had remembered it upstairs in kitchen. I watched him until reached the corner, and I saw turn dutifully down the next sid the block. Then I waited, watch the clock, leaning out the win over and over, until finally I him again, coming from the o direction. He was at the far en our block, making his steady wa the sidewalk toward the can over our door.

I was standing outside by the vator when the door opened to veal him. His face, in the gol

BOOKSHELF



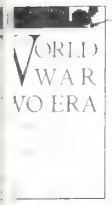
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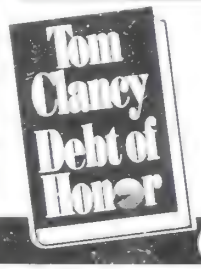
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shadow, was meditative and glo
"I'm back," he announced.

He was back, unharmed proud. That was what I had in ed. But at what risk! I still wak in the dark with the nightmar sion of someone stepping to him on the sidewalk, taking J trusting hand and leading him A stranger taking possession of child that occupies my heart. God, I think at two o'clock in morning, my limbs locked with sion and fear, how could I hav him go?

It is a puzzle to me, this memo riddle about freedom and safety dependence and responsibili don't know the answer to it. Wh zipped up Jock's pale yellow sl and sent him into the world, I m him to know he could turn from that he was free. But I shou have done it, I shouldn't have t that terrible risk. When I think now it seems as though his sur was a miracle, an extraordinary undeserved piece of luck. It s dangerous, that luck, someth

I may have to pay later.

Now Margaret asked, "Are going to the parents' meetin Tuesday?"

"I think so," I said. "I think should go to those meetings. B don't even know if they're im tant. You know you should go, why?"

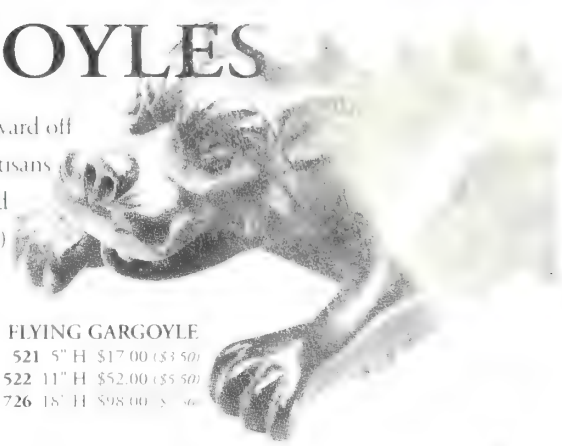
Margaret smiled. "I know w you mean," she said, "but I think do it for solidarity. Anyway, I w to know everything the teac know. I want to know everyth they think about my kid, what t theories are and what they sugge may not do it, but I want to know

Actually, Margaret did nee know what the teachers thou about Willie: he was a discip problem and in constant troub school. But she was also right ab solidarity. That's what mothers one another: support, complic humor. I felt ashamed that I willing to offer so little, that I so lazy and insular. I was chaste by Margaret's response, the f that she was determined to

s properly, to take part, to be
ved
ou're much more responsible
I am," I said. "I still have the
g that kids grow themselves up.
t just happens."
ou're probably right," said Mar
cheerfully. "They probably do.
vildly over-responsible. What
say?"
"hat does Frank think?"
"ho knows what Frank thinks?
crazed about taking charge of
thing that he backs off. He
y remembers what Willie's
is."
llie and Jock were in the mid-
f some sort of contest. Their
were lowered over their bowls
hey were staring intently at
other, slurping from their soup
s and laughing raucously. Still
g fixedly at Jock, Willie said,
ly knows my name."
rgaret looked at him, irritated.
ourse Daddy knows your name.
was a figure of speech."
addy knows my name," Willie
ted, "and I *want* to live with
I'd *like* to live alone with Dad-
He put a huge spoonful of soup
mouth. At once he lapsed into
cackle. The soup, deliberately
cidentally—it was hard to tell
ne spraying out in a wild fan,
er the table and over Willie.
was a declaration of mutiny.
ock, of course, began laughing
ll, rocking dangerously on his
stool and kicking his feet.
h, *Willie*!" said Margaret. "*Look*
you've done." She stalked to
ink and got the sponge. "Get
off your stool," she snapped.
ie, get down. Now."
llie still did not look at her. He
own off the stool and then put
nds on the table. He began lit-
ringing jumps, kicking himself
gainst the floor, as though he
going to heave himself up and
the middle of the soup-sprayed
ce. He was flopping his head
side to side and laughing wild-
ck was doing the same: hysteria
set in, the last refuge of the
about to be punished.
Willie, look at me," Margaret
kneeling in front of him, the
ge in her hand, trying to mop

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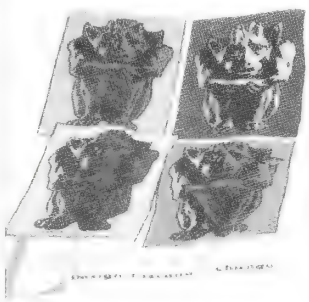


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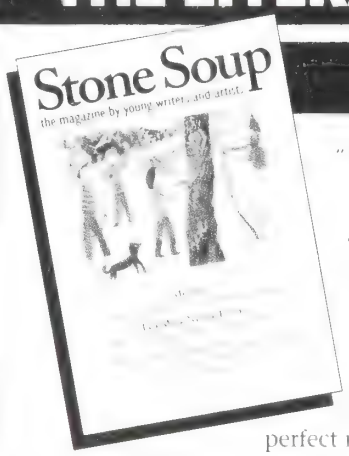
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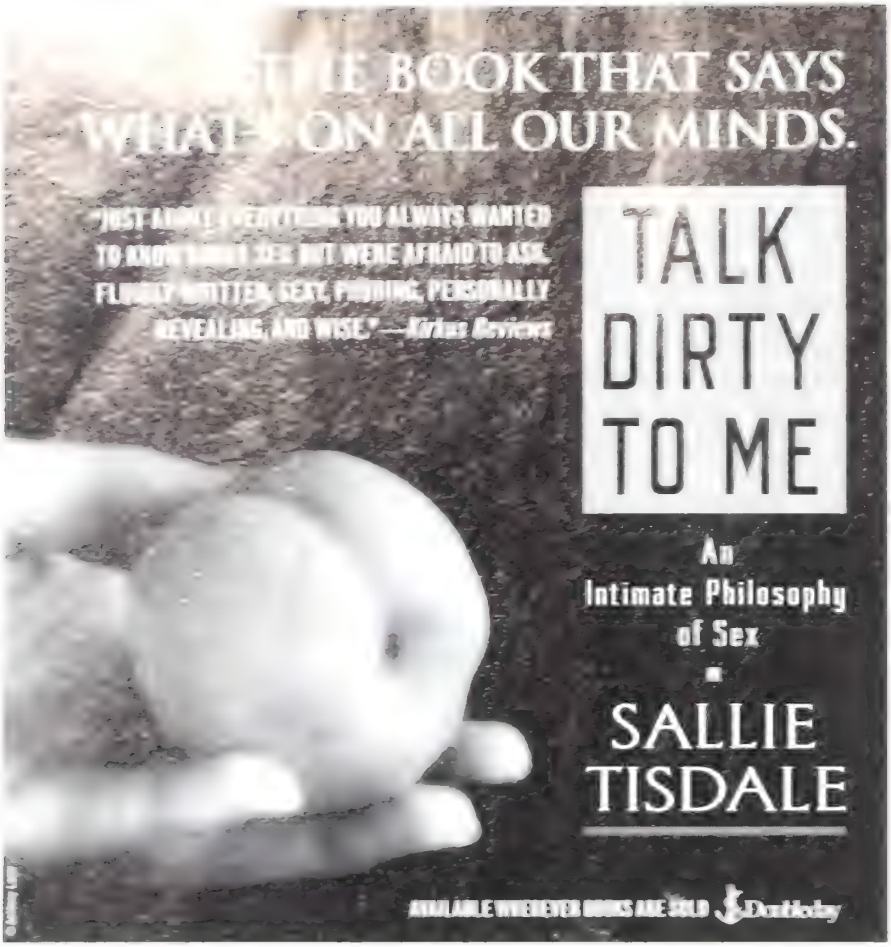
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part of me felt just like Mar-
—mean, tyrannical, swollen.
of me wanted that child sub-
, wanted him shaken until his
chattered, until his will was
n and he stopped his derisive
. I knew the feeling, all par-
lo, of the rage that threatens

illie, listen to me," Margaret
iolently, talking through her
"Listen to me. If you don't stop
ight now, this minute, you are
ing the rest of the afternoon in
oom. Alone. Jock will have to
me. Now *stop it!*"
ere it was, the big threat. I tried
use it, because Jock always
the challenge. And following
gh on it was always inconve-
Now we all waited: everyone's
noon hung in the balance,
and mine and Margaret's, to
thing of Willie's. But Willie
hesitated.
yanked himself away from
aret again and began springing
id down. His eyes were still
ed shut, and over and over he
violent explosion noises. He
rocket, a cannonball, a space-
a bullet, anything but a submis-
hild.
l right," said Margaret, furi-
All right. Is this what you
" But she didn't move. "Is this
you're trying to do? Stop it,
e, I mean it," she said.
bounced up, landed, crouched,
aunched himself again, unim-
l.
rgaret stood up now and shook
ead. It was as though nothing
happened, no wildness, no
, no feeble retreat. She cleaned
up off the table and sat down
, ignoring the boys.
onestly," she said to me, "it's
having lunch in the Lion
e."
k watched, interested: this was
what would have happened at
ouse. And I watched, unhappy:
aret's strategy baffled me. It
ed that if you didn't follow
gh, there was no point in mak-
hreats at all. It seemed to me
ere just teaching a child that
was no risk to rebelling. But I
nothing to Margaret. Why

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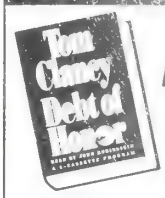
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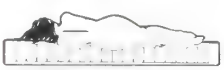
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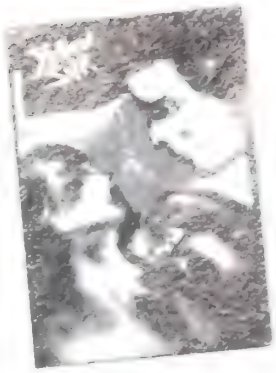
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[illegible] my instinct be better [illegible] on his own, at five years old, in [illegible] York City? No, we all make ou[illegible] mistakes, we all act crazily, inc[illegible] sibly. We are saved by time p[illegible] and by miracles, not by the int[illegible] ence of our friends.

But Willie was not to be der[illegible] climax. Behind Margaret, in a[illegible] zling throwaway gesture, he ups[illegible] bowl, sending heavy split-pea[illegible] in a great floating wave onto [illegible] garet's back, soaking her silk blo[illegible]

"All right!" she shouted. "T[illegible] enough! You come here with [illegible] This time she took Willie's arm [illegible] yanked him along behind her. [illegible] the kitchen. Again, Willie re[illegible] all his limbs and let himse[illegible] dragged, limp, letting gravity d[illegible] his reluctance.

When they were gone, Jock [illegible] looked solemnly at each other.

"Poor Willie," I said. "He d[illegible] seem very happy."

Jock shook his head, but he [illegible] not speak to me; he would not [illegible] my side against his friend. H[illegible] silent and mournful, taking [illegible] spoonfuls of his soup, his head [illegible] I drank my tea. When Mar[illegible] came back, she was brisk and [illegible] ing, her cheeks pink with fury [illegible] had changed her shirt and put [illegible] thin cashmere sweater.

"Sorry," she said, sitting [illegible] again. "I'm sorry, Jock, but W[illegible] forgot his manners and he forgo[illegible] rules. He's going to stay by hi[illegible] for a while and think about ther[illegible]

"When can Willie come [illegible] Jock asked. He seemed very [illegible] and quiet. It was now hard to [illegible] me him laughing raucously, ki[illegible] his legs under the table.

"Willie has to stay in his roor[illegible] til his father comes home," Mar[illegible] said brutally. She picked up her [illegible] of tea in both hands and brou[illegible] to her mouth. It concealed her [illegible] except for her eyes, which were [illegible] ing. She looked wild, distraught [illegible] I thought she was close to tears.

Jock's face fell. His afternoon [illegible] emptied of color, and he playe[illegible] jectedly with the cracker or [illegible] plate. I wanted to comfort bo[illegible] them, but I could think of not[illegible] to say to Margaret.

ally I said, "Well, Jocko, you
d will go to the park if you like,
can go home and I'll play a
with you. Whatever game you
He glanced up at me, weighing
offer soberly, though we both
it didn't make up for his after-
with Willie.
aited before I moved, but Mar-
didn't look at me or answer, so
ught she was making herself
She didn't want to talk about
ver she was feeling.
think we'll get going," I said to
'Sorry this happened, but don't
about it. I'm sure we played a
in it; it wasn't all Willie." I
ed to make her feel less isolated,
antic, but she shook her head.
h, don't *you* worry about it,"
said, walking us to the front
"It wasn't Jock's fault. Willie
learn what the rules are, that's
Her face was stiff now, her head
p, and she had her hands deep
e pockets of her trim black
. She looked very cool, very
in charge.
Well, don't let it get you down.
knows, it happens all the time,"
l, shaking my head slightly, as
gh Jock spent all his daytime
shut in his room. But Margaret
d politely uncomprehending, as
gh she didn't know exactly what
talking about. I couldn't think
y other way to reach her, and it
ed clear to me that she didn't
to be reached. So we left her
, in her apartment, with Willie
on the other side of a
grimly locked door.

should have stayed with her, I
hat now. What she had said
"We're all in this together."
t support was I giving her by
ng her alone, by letting her pre-
that everything was all right?
hat happened was that Willie
led to escape. His bedroom was
the upper floor of their apart-
There were no bars on the
lows, because they had moved
hen Willie was six, and old
gh to understand about not
bing out the window, old
gh to know the dangers of
e floors of space.
ow Willie was even older, more

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sweater from his bureau and put it on by himself, backward, the label out onto his windowsill, the terrace below must have looked inviting. It was diagonally beneath him, not directly below, but on the way there were windowsills, ledges, cornices, safe things to grip. The climb would have looked dangerous but feasible, and he was right: it was both. There were places he could cling and balance as he clambered down and sideways, through the singing air, the wind holding him against the building, until he could let go enough over to drop the last few feet onto the terrace.

What comes next is the part that is hard to think about. The doors to the living room were locked. Willie stayed on the terrace, maybe shivering, maybe hoping and not hoping to see his mother. She passed the living room several times that afternoon, but she heard nothing, she saw nothing. She tries to remember, now, if she might have heard something. If he had called, if he had knocked, would she have heard? But she heard nothing. Perhaps when she passed he was there. Perhaps she looked for him behind, sobered by his climb, tearful at last of her rage. Perhaps he had been sobered by what he had done: going himself flattened against the cold brick side of the building, he had felt the terrible call of the drop, the rush of the sidewalk, twelve stories down. Perhaps after this he had lost facing her rage as well was too much for him. But he was there on the terrace for a while. He left a plastic superhero balanced on the sill outside the French door, waiting for it to open. He didn't knock on ther to let him in. He made no demands. For some period of time he stayed alone out there, wind, his sweater on back Maybe he played for a while the superhero, under the lover December sky. But it's hard to me him playing; it's hard to im subdued.

At some point Willie decid climb back up. He was trying do his mistake, to be good. H Margaret wanted to find him; h thought better of his escape. Margaret finally knocked at his calm, her heart no longer ch against him, her rage no lon charge, Willie wanted to be s in his room, the window shu sweater off.

He clambered first up ont broad parapet. There he stoo sneakered feet tiptoed and tee as he stretched for the first wi ledge. But climbing up is very ent from climbing down, an time the ledge was slightly too slightly too far, for h hold his weight.

We are not in this together things that separate us are te and irreversible. What lies no tween me and Margaret will lie forever, a chasm twelve stories

These things should not ha With luck, any luck at all, t would have gone differently. garet would have seen him, th race doors would have been locked, the window ledge w have been closer. And neither garet nor Willie ever wanted to that thicket of hostility. They each other, mothers, children matter what they say, what the That should count. And repent is meant to save.

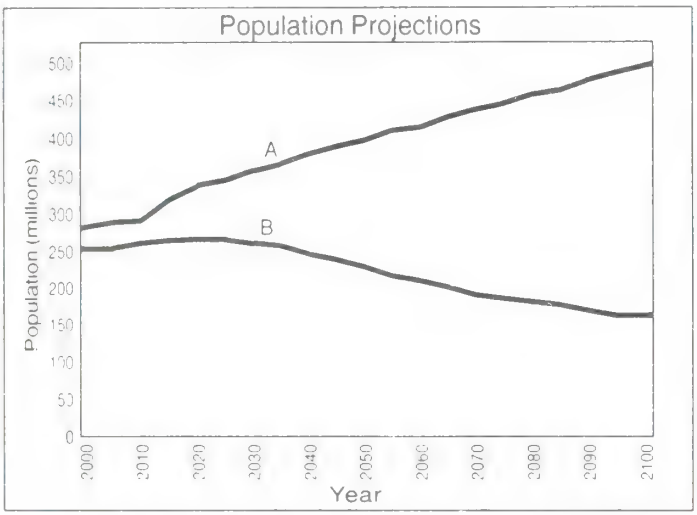
Most often there are mira most children are saved. Wh miracle doesn't happen, when hear that a child is lost, the ter sound of it echoes within your a series of slow reverberations continue, deep inside you, dis and sinister. You feel ter the tiginous pull downward, the that you escaped for no reason. you hold your own child close to close, no matter how he struggles

Going Down the Drain

That headline may not be scholarly, and the tone is perhaps too flippant for a deadly serious m it would be hard to find a more apt description of where our country is heading as a direct result of t less growth of our population.

The arguments for first halting, then reversing, U.S. popu- ion growth would seem so compelling as to raise the ques- "Why isn't it being done?".

Line A shows where our population is headed with cur- t levels of fertility and immigration— to nearly 400 mil- by 2050, and to nearly a half billion by the end of the t century!



Such population wth would surely lead lisaster for future gen- tions of Americans. It uld have profound im- cts upon the environ- nt, on renewable re- irces like farmland, for- s and water, and on our iety itself.

A smaller population uld help the nation deal th the social, environ- ntal and resource prob- ns that confront us, yet y few of our politicians d pundits even consider idea.

On the assumption that they are held back by unwar- nted fears, we will try to explain briefly by what relatively ntle adjustments we could turn U.S. population growth ound.

Line B shows what could be achieved with the "two child nily" and with immigration reduced to the levels that pre- iled for much of this century.

If parents indeed "stop at two" it would lead to a total rtility rate (TFR) of about 1.5 children, because not all omen have children, and some have only one. A national FR of 1.5 would make possible a gradual turnaround in the pulation growth that drives our social and environmental oblems.

We Need to Reduce Immigration

But the two child family alone will not enable the nation reach a smaller population size. It would need to be ac- mpanied by a substantial reduction in current levels of im- igration.

In 1900 we were a nation of less than 76 million. Almost lf of the population increase since then has been post-1900 migrants and their descendants. The Census Bureau ojects that our present population of some 260 million will crease by 2050 to 392 million (middle projection), or even 522 million (high projection).

Of the population growth anticipated for the 21st cen- ry, nearly 90 percent will be post-2000 immigrants and their scendants. In other words, immigration is the driving force hind a disastrous surge of population growth.

The average annual level of recorded gross immigration om 1924 through the 1960s was 198,000. Immigration is w over a million per year. If we were willing to bring net immigration down to 200,000 a year, our demo ture would improve dramatically.

If we moved now to the "two child family" and c rently brought immigration under control at an annual of 200,000, it would lead in the next century to the popu tion projection shown in the graph *(Line B)*.

By the middle of the next century parents could even be encouraged to have more children, for a total fertility rate of 1.9. That rate would allow our nation to maintain a constant population size of around 150 million.

If, at the same time, we change our lifestyles to reduce unnecessary consumption, and use energy and materials far more efficiently, such a population size should be sustainable for the very long term.

The Choice Is Ours

We need to choose the path leading to a sustainable U.S. population of around 150 million. To get there we would need the combination of the two child family and a moderate net immigration of 200,000 a year. What would be so difficult about that?

We need, above all, the courage to make now the decisions that would safeguard our demographic future. We urge Third World nations to bite the bullet and face up to their demographic problems. How about doing it ourselves?

by Donald Mann, President

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NOTHING VENTURED

A bold leap into the ontological void

By Jim Holt

M

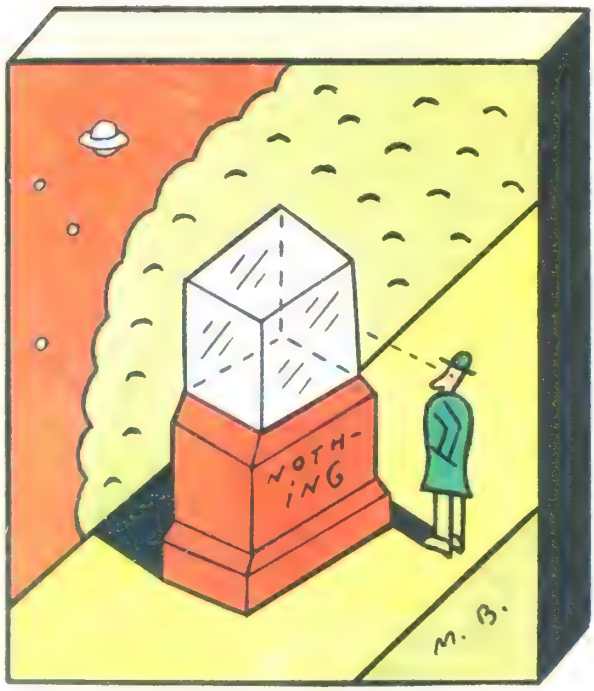
good deal of time thinking about nothing. Few, though, take the next obvious step and wonder: why is there something rather than nothing? Perhaps

posed by the philosopher G. W.

William James called it "the darkest question in all philoso-

A. C. B. Lovell observed that it

And, indeed, vexing over it is often a prelude to dementia.



power" at least once in our lives,

all their weight and all meaning becomes obscured. . . . It is present in moments of rejoicing, when all the things

understand that they are and are as they

are. The question is

in boredom, when

equally removed from

and joy, and everything

us seems so hopelessly

monplace that we no

care whether anything

not . . .

It can even be argue

we are impotent to answ

question at all until we

answered the question

there is something rathe

nothing. For, as the H

philosopher Robert N

has written, "how c

know why something

should be) a certain wa

don't know why there i

thing at all?" But why s

one bother with a quest

such generality that it a

impossible to answer

though it is certainly re

able to inquire why

particular thing in the world ex

our solar system, life on earth

clock in Grand Central static

makes no sense to demand the sa

the *tout ensemble*. Any factor

duced to explain why there is

thing rather than nothing—a c

egg, a fluctuation in a vacuum, a

scendent purpose, an omnip

diety—will itself be part of the

o be explained. Besides, if the s by definition all that exists, it seem foolish to inquire why the itself exists. That is like asking triangle has three sides. Exist- just what the world does. To Why is there something rather othing?" is, to this way of think- ot to pose a real question. It is to odize—to express awe, aston- nt, bewilderment before the cos- Wittgenstein himself suggested as when he remarked: "If I say, 'I r at the existence of the world,' misusing language."

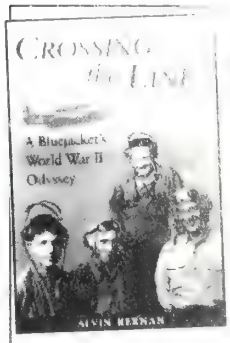
ether the existence of the world *sterium tremendum et fascinans* here tautology, it continues to se the imagination of philoso- and theologians, not to men- stoned undergraduates and niac yuppies having a Dark of the Soul. And it is becoming ecial province of a small group sicists known as "nothing the- With some metaphysical chutz- hese physicists are seeking to e the "how" question that cor- nds to "Why is there something than nothing?": to wit, how something have spontaneously from nothing? For we now know contrary to what Aristotle be- l, the cosmos is not eternal. r, it sprang into being some 15 n years ago with the explosion of finitesimal speck of infinitely ntrated energy.

is truth, broached early in the ry and recently put beyond by the data from the COBE nic Background Explorer) satel- as not been unanimously wel- l by physicists. Einstein, for one, the idea that the universe had nning in time nutty and down- repugnant, although the evi- finally compelled him to t it shortly before his death. great cosmologist Fred Hoyle ht that an explosion was an nified way for the world to com- e, rather like a party girl jump- t of a cake; once, during a BBC cast, he derisively referred to ypothesized origin as "the Big " and the term stuck. Church- by contrast, had finally seen a ific discovery that was cause neer rather than gloom. Pope Pius XII, opening a scientific conference at the Vatican in 1951, declared that the Big Bang theory bore witness "to that primordial *fiat lux* uttered at the moment when, along with matter, there burst forth from nothing a sea of light and radiation. . . . Hence, creation took place in time; therefore there is a creator, therefore God exists!"

Whether or not the Big Bang truly implies that the universe was created out of nothing by an omnipotent deity in a wholly gratuitous act of love, it does demonstrate that the universe is, as philosophers say, *contingent*—that is, it need not have existed. Anything that exists by its own nature, that is the cause and ground of its own being, must be eternal and imperishable. The universe is neither of these things. Just as space, time, and matter winked into existence with the Big Bang, expanding to form the present universe, so too will they likely begin contracting one day when gravity arrests the expansion, eventually winking out of existence altogether in a great cosmic implosion—the Big Crunch. The cosmos is thus a mere interlude between two nothings. It cannot contain the reason for its own existence, the ground of its own being.

But, then, what could? Only God, say the theologians. Remember the words that the Supreme Being called out to Moses from the burning bush? "I am that I am." What He was trying to put across was that His existence is contained in His very essence. (Indeed, the Israelite name for God, *Yahweh*, is a form of the Hebrew verb "to be.") Being the cause of His own existence, He doesn't have occasion to ask Himself, "Whence, then, am I?" In the eleventh century, Saint Anselm of Canterbury elaborated this idea into an ingenious argument for the existence of God. Anselm's "ontological proof," which the monk cast in the form of a prayer, began with the premise that God is the greatest and most perfect thing that can be conceived. It is clearly greater and more perfect to exist than not to exist, Anselm reasoned, for a real being is greater than a merely fictitious one. "So truly, therefore, dost thou exist, O Lord, My God, that thou canst not

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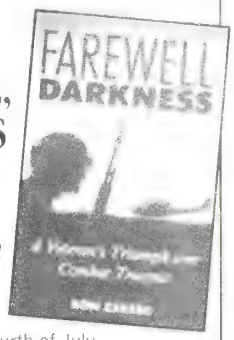


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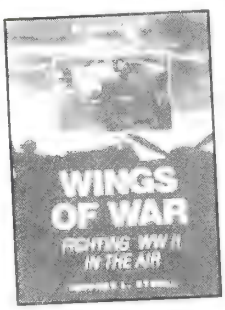
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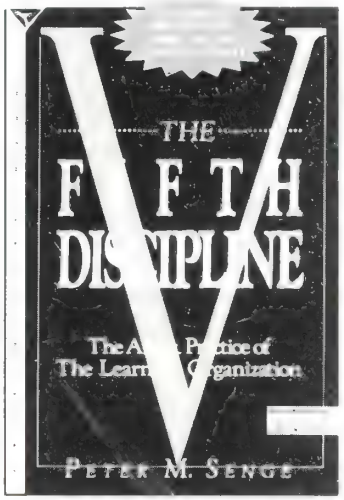
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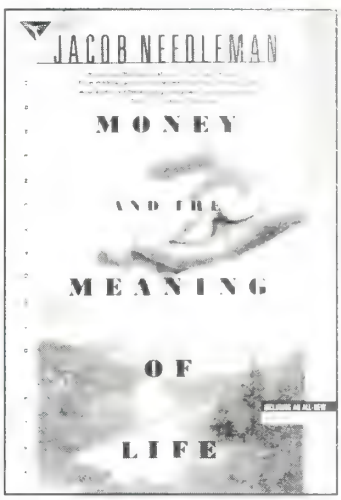
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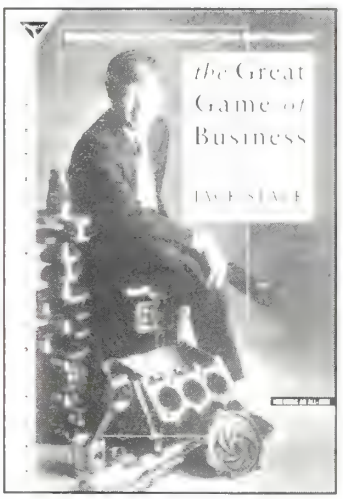
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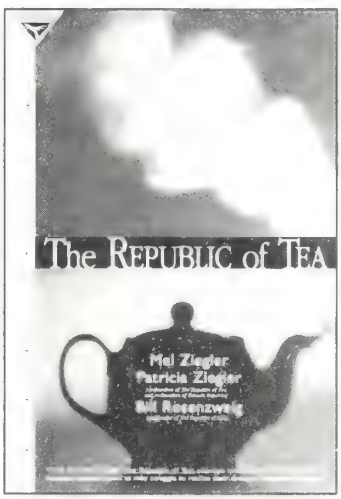
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the absolute. Nothing will complete-
content of the realization that there
confident that we will not come up
empty-handed. For as the old saying

What
swered this question with admirable
not. (Or as my dictionary puts it,
that does not exist.") Although the
ancient Eleatic sage Parmenides de-
rule in the process—the plain man
knows better. Nothing is, for exam-
ple, popularly held to be better than
a dry martini but worse than sand in
the bedsheets. On occasion, nothing
could be further from the truth, but
it is not clear how much further.
Nothing is impossible for God yet a
breeze for the rankest incompetent.
In fact, no matter what pair of con-
tradictory properties you choose,
nothing seems capable of embody-
ing them. From this it might be con-
But that would simply mean that ev-
erything is obvious—including, pre-
sumably, nothing. That, perhaps, is
why the world abounds with people
who know, understand, and believe in
nothing. But beware of speaking blas-
phemously of nothing, for there are
also many bumptious types about—
call them nullophiles—who are fond
of declaring that, to them, nothing is

The philosophers of antiquity were
inclined to agree. *Ex nihilo nihil*, they
unanimously declared: "Nothing
comes from nothing." Not only does
this maxim attribute to nothing the
divine quality of being self-generating;
it also impiously denies God the pow-
er to prevail against nothingness, to
bring about a world *ex nihilo*. The best
my deity could do, they held, was to
organize a cosmos out of a primordial
mess they called Chaos; but this is an

blooded creation. Centuries
Leibniz paid nothing a similar
pliment, declaring that it was
and easier than something."
experience teaches the same
Nothing is simple, sublime
This conviction initially
prompted the great Rationalist
why there was something rather
nothing in the first place: If
were nothing, after all, there'd
nothing to be explained.

It was left to Hegel, thought
nothing up and really make shi
it—or perhaps stranger
"At the beginning of Hegel's
dialectic is the assumption
Absolute is Pure Being. But
ing is totally indefinite; it has
nes; it is utterly empty. It is
Pure Nothing. You can't have
out the other; they are dia
twins. And yet, inasmuch as
also contraries, they can't coexist
happily. Something new must
that reconciles and supersedes
And that turns out to be: Beg
Becoming is what happens when
ing is on the verge of passing
Nothing—or vice versa. Thus
Hegelian dialectic get merrily
way, eventually yielding up hu
tory and culture in all their v
ed splendor. As a feat of onto
boot-strapping, this is breatht
leaves Saint Ansel
ply nowhere.

So nothing is nice, simpl
begetting, and not really all th
ferent from something. Wh
wonders, was it regarded wit
apprehension by the existen
Heidegger was filled with angs
very thought of nothing (thou
did not keep him from writing
ously about it). For him the enc
with nothingness was suffuse
the dread of one's own impe
nonbeing—the dread of death.
too, was possessed by a sort of
vacui. "Nothingness haunts b
he wrote in the treatise aptly e
Being and Nothingness. Not eve
cafés of Saint Germain offere
tain relief from nullity. He g
Deux Magots—on a good day, a
ness of being"—to meet Pierre.
is not there. *Et voilà*: a little p
nothingness, a *frisson* of anguish.

. must be said that neither Sartre
edegger was very favorably dis-
ward the category of existence
Requiem, the autobiograph
ter of Sartre's novel *Nausea*,
imself "choked with rage" at
enormous lumps" of "gross, sly
ing" that environ him as he
les a chestnut tree in Bouville
niverse, in all its gooey contin
y is *de trop*. For the more phleg
Heidegger, the feeling elicited by
is" was not so much nausea as
m. Ontologically speaking, the
rtualists were fussy customers
t something not nothing at
them much jollity.
oss the Channel, British
ophers dismissed these vapor-
much ado about nothing. The
J. Ayer submitted that Sartre,
gger, and their epigones had
ooled by the grammar of "noth-
since it behaves like a noun,
ssumed that it must refer to an
something. (The White King
ough the Looking Glass made a
blunder when he reasoned that
body had passed the messenger
road, Nobody should have an
first.) Ayer's brethren among
gical positivists singled out for
on Heidegger's famous pro-
cement *"Das Nichts nichtet"*
ning noths." Nothingness is more
mere entity, Heidegger seemed
implying, it is a great annihi-
force. "Nothing" turns out not
noun after all, but the present
iple of the transitive verb "to
". Nonsense with knobs on,
ded the positivists. Nonsense
lts.
what it nothing really is a kind
e? What if it does "noth"? Per-
t just might noth itself. The idea
nothing could usher the world
ence by committing suicide, as it
may seem a pretty funny way
wer the question "Why is there
thing rather than nothing?" But
been semi-seriously raised by no
thinker than Robert Nozick. In
ok *Philosophical Explanations*, he
s us to imagine nothing as "a
an force, sucking things into
existence or keeping them there.
force acts upon itself, it sucks
ingness into nothingness, pro-
g something or, perhaps, every

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Can Israel survive without it

With the "peace agreement" between Israel and the PLO, the Middle E
have entered a new phase. It will inevitably lead to the creation of a Pales
Can Israel survive this dismemberment? Is it in the best interest of the Uni

What are the facts?

The Root of the Conflict. The conflict between Israel and the Arabs is not about borders and not about the Palestinians. It is about Israel's very existence. The PLO still adheres to its infamous "phased plan"; it calls for first creating a Palestinian state on any territory vacated by Israel and then using that state to foment a final allied Arab assault against the truncated Jewish state.

The Importance of Territory. Many believe that in this age of missiles, territory is of little importance. But this is not the case. The Arab states have acquired over $50 billion of the most advanced armaments since the end of the Gulf War. And those are not just "conventional" weapons—enormous quantities of tanks, aircraft and much more. The Arab states possess large arsenals of chemical and biological weapons, and all of them work feverishly on the development of their nuclear potential. All of those weapons have only one single target and one single purpose: the destruction of the state of Israel. And that goal is not being cancelled for any agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

For both "conventional" war and for war of mass destruction, territory and topography are critical for self-defense and deterrence. The mountainous territory of Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") is an indispensable line of defense. It c controls access to Israel's heartland from the east. Israel needs this high ground to defense and to be able to peer deeply into enemy territory. The high ground allows Israel to detect missiles while they are still in the launch stage and to destroy them.

Would the "West Bank" be demilitarized? Even those who want Israel to retreat to her pre-1967 borders are agreed that the evacuated areas must be demilitarized. But that would be useless. Because the Palestinians will have thousands of trained soldiers, camouflaged as their police force. In case of war against Israel, these troops could be helicoptered in minutes to their positions, with armored forces reaching them within the same night. In any case, it is highly doubtful that the surrounding hostile Arab nations would allow such a military vacuum to exist. And finally, there is the matter of terrorism. There are over fifteen Palestinian Arab terror organizations that neither Yassir Arafat nor any other Palestinian authority can control. There would be a constant rain of Katyusha rockets launched into the Tel Aviv area and into the entire coastal plain, which contains 80% of Israel's population and of its industrial and military potential. Ben Gurion airport, every incoming and outgoing flight, would be subject to mortar fire or shoulder-held Stinger attack. Does anybody doubt that the Arabs would not exploit that irresistible opportunity?

> "Without Judea/Samaria (the 'West Bank') Israel would be totally indefensible; therefore, neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the 'West Bank'."

Without the "West Bank" Israel would be totally indefensible. That is the professional opinion of over 100 U.S. generals and admirals. Israel's strong defensive posture makes it most inadvisable for Israel's enemies to attack her. But once this defensive strength is removed, a coordinated war against Israel can only be a matter of time. The example and fate of Czechoslovakia, which preparatory to the Second World War was dismantled and shorn of its defensive capacity, insistently come to mind. What does all this mean to the United States? In a part of the world in which our country has the most far-reaching geopolitical stakes, Israel is the guarantor of American interests in the area. With Israel in a position of weakness the role of the United States in the area would collapse and radical states such as Syria, Iraq and Iran would dominate. That is why, despite the heady prospect of "peace in our time", neither the purposes of Israel nor those of the United States are served by Israel's relinquishing control over the "West Bank".

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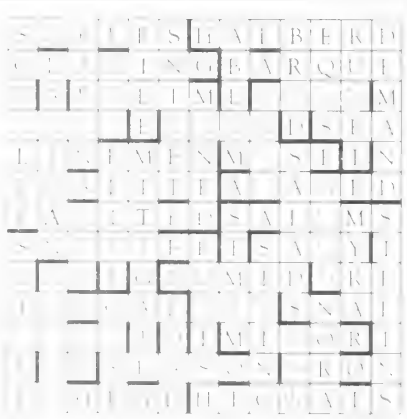
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[illegible] prestigious in the nation is small (no more than a [illegible] students apply for each spot in fiction and [illegible] of our graduate workshops. All of these are held in the [illegible] dusty windows a glimpse of the Charles River. Perhaps [illegible] instruction by Robert Lowell—gathered, by the way, less often in [illegible] our permanent [illegible] Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, who also conducts the playwriting [illegible] fiction are led by Leslie Epstein and Jayne Anne Phillips. In addition our [illegible] long workshops [illegible] visitors as C.K. Williams, Charles Simic, John Cheever, Stanley Elkin, and [illegible] our students have about them the resources of a great university. That means [illegible] besides the poet Geoffrey Hill [illegible] critics Roger Shattuck and Christopher Ricks, Boston University's two other Nobel Prize winners, Saul Bellow and Elie Wiesel. It is difficult to know how best to measure a student's success, or the worth of a program to a writer, we can say that our graduates in each genre have accomplished a good deal. Over the last few years, for instance, our playwrights have won the ABC National Playwriting Prize, the Charles MacArthur Award for Comedy, the Theater of Louisville Best One-Act Play Award, first prize in both the 21st Century Playwrights' Festival and the Baltimore Playwrights Festival, and another of our playwrights had a full production with The Naked Angels [illegible] graduates in poetry have won the $30,000 Whiting Award, the Barnard New Women Poets Series, a grant from the NEA, the Norma Farber First Book Award from the Poetry Society of America, there have been three winners in three years of the "Discovery"/*The Nation* Award, and two winners of the National Poetry Series. In fiction, our students have won an inordinate share of the nationwide Henfield Awards. Not a year goes by without a graduate of our program bringing out a novel or book of stories; since her graduation, Sue Miller has published three such volumes and won a good deal of fame, and some fortune as well. We make, of course, no such assurances. Our only promise, to those who join us, is of a fair amount of time in that river-view room, time shared with other writers in a common, most difficult pursuit: the perfection of one's craft.

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thing, every possibility." Noz[illegible] calls the vacuum-cleaner like [illegible] *Yellow Submarine* that goes [illegible] sucking up everything it enc[illegible] After hoovering away the surr[illegible] background, it ultimately turn[illegible] self and sucks itself into nonex[illegible] with a pop, the world reappear[illegible] with the Beatles. (Come to thi[illegible] the cosmic background hiss lo[illegible] from the Big Bang *does* rather[illegible] ble a giant sucking sound.)

One of Nozick's more acute[illegible] vations on the question "Why [illegible] something rather than noth[illegible] that it is bused, it presuppos[illegible] nothing is a privileged, natur[illegible] that requires no explanation, a[illegible] something is a mysterious de[illegible] from it. Now, it is true that it [illegible] did exist, no one would be ar[illegible] ask, "Why is there nothing rath[illegible] something?" It is also true tha[illegible] there are many possible ways f[illegible] to be something—worlds in [illegible] Henry Kissinger is a steeplejack, [illegible] in which everything is made of [illegible] cheese—there is only one v[illegible] there to be nothing; and that u[illegible] ness would seem to elevate [illegible] from the crowd. But this is [illegible] edged sword. For if all of these [illegible] bilities—the myriad worlds [illegible] there is something and the sing[illegible] where there is nothing—are as[illegible] equal chances of occurring (ar[illegible] shouldn't they be?), then it is [illegible] whelmingly probable that there [illegible]

something rather [illegible]
nothing

Tennessee Williams once sa[illegible] "a vacuum is a hell of a lot bette[illegible] some of the stuff nature repl[illegible] with." That sentiment has not st[illegible] certain contemporary philosop[illegible] a Platonic kidney from assertin[illegible] the world exists because it is so [illegible] better than nothing. The leadi[illegible] ponent of this Axiarchic Schoo[illegible] Canadian philosopher John L[illegible] With considerable sophistication [illegible] argues that the cosmos explode[illegible] being in answer to a need for [illegible] ness. "Suppose there is no nih[illegible] force fighting the existence of th[illegible] says Leslie. "Then absolutely any[illegible] ground or reason for things will t[illegible] bring about their materialization [illegible] ethical realities supply such grou[illegible]

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"What about the problem of
Camus said that the murdered
themselves murderers in a previ-
Christian apologists invoke
scrutability of God's designs
claimed that conflict and
ness were mere appearances
anarchists, to their credit, do not
make evil disappear. Rather,
ng to the majestic complexity of
things, the mathematical beau-
he laws that govern the uni-
and the presence of conscious
to enjoy it all, they submit
he world is on balance good
n—that is, at least marginal-
er than nothing. So its ex-
is ethically required. Given
iciently developed sense of
one can almost accept this
alternative, after all, is to be
hat the triumph of Full Being
he Absence of All Things was
matter of reasonless luck. Or
s the Hunter College physicist
on is fond of putting it, "the
se is simply one of those things
ppens from time to time." Irv-
ds the distinction of being the
the "nothing theorists," a ca-
theoretical cosmologists (clus-
nostly on the banks of the Cam
e Charles Rivers and on Man-
's Upper West Side) who are
to fathom what happened be-
e Big Bang. It was in 1969 that
doing a bit of woolgathering
a talk by a visiting celebrity
st at Columbia University, sud
blurted out, "Suppose the uni-
s just a quantum fluctuation?"
was greeted with a good deal of
nphing by the several Nobel
tes present. What the callow
was suggesting was that the en-
smos might have bounded in-
stence out of nowhere—in
ete accordance with the laws
sics.
key to it all is the notorious
nberg Uncertainty Principle,
says that, provided the scale is
nough and the duration is suf-
ly brief, anything can happen
space-time bubbles can froth
n nowhere, elementary particles
pear and disappear. Add to this
nflationary theory" developed
Harvard physicist Alan Guth
early 1980s, which allows mi-

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paltry nothings, not the real i could hold them in the palm hand. They scarce much angst.

Of all the nothing theo one who appears to have got c true *creatio ex nihilo* is Alex V a Ukrainian émigré cosmolo at Tufts University. When V says the universe arose from *no* means it. "Nothing is noth told me over the phone. "No matter. No space, no time." (suggested that I think of nasc verses as little bubbles form glass of champagne—and th inate the champagne.) By a q process called "tunneling," w mits the breaching of other passable barriers, space-time from nothing into a manifol tential universes, and thence ality. Of course, since time created in the process, these tions cannot be thought of a place in time. They are a log a temporal, sequence—one by the laws of physics.

But where do the laws con And why *these* laws? We ap have traded one origin myster other. "They exist prior to t verse," Vilenkin assured me. like, you can say they're in th of God," he added in a bit of hand-waving that is fashi among physicists these days. F pose the laws of quantum phy somehow precede the cosmos ing transcendently like Plat nal Forms. That does not cha fact that they are only a set o tions, a mathematical patter have no ontic clout. They demiurge to get behind the shove. As Stephen Hawking a *A Brief History of Time*, "Wh that breathes fire into the eq and makes a universe for them scribe? . . . Why does the univ to all the bother of existing?"

If the laws of physics come i ing along with the universe, th can't explain it. If they exist the universe, then there is not account for *their* existence mention their extraordinary p exact obedience from the void is the dilemma of the nothing

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nd there is no need to get in
n at's hours when a much more
nical way of showing why there
thing rather than nothing is
le. It goes like this. Suppose, for
ke of argument, that nothing
d. Then, in particular, there
be no laws. (Laws are some-
after all, despite what the noth-
orists seem to think.) If there
o laws, then everything would
nitted. If everything were per-
, then nothing would be for-
. Therefore, if nothing existed,
g would be forbidden. There-
othing, if it existed, would for-
elf. *Therefore there must be*
ng.

t is my own argument. I thought
e other day while shaving. The
eems to be sound; at least, no
ave run it by so far has detect-
w. Yet admittedly there is some-
terile about it. So I decided to
one more round of experts to
dgment on my musings.

I phoned a theoretical physi-
iow at Cal Tech. I got his voice
d said I had a question for him.
led back and left a message on
swering machine. "Leave your
on on my voice mail and I'll
the answer on your machine,"
his instructions. This was allur-
complied. When I returned to
artment late that evening, the
ight was blinking on my an-
g machine. I played the mes-
ack with some trepidation. It
m the physicist.

ay," it began, "what you're
talking about is violation of
-antimatter parity . . ."

called a professor of philosoph-
ology at the University of Vir-
asked him if the fact that there
thing rather than nothing could
ained by invoking a deity whose
entailed his existence. "Are
lding?" he said. "God is so per-
doesn't *have* to exist."

n, on a street in Greenwich Vil-
an into a Zen Buddhist schol-
had been introduced to me
t a cocktail party as an author-
nystical matters. After a little
at, I asked him – perhaps, in
ect, precipitately – why there
thing rather than nothing. He

Continued on page 80

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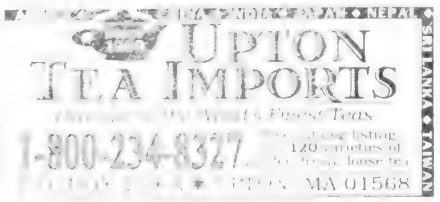
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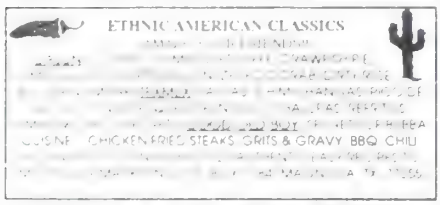
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Continued from page 83

tried to bop me on the head. I
have thought it was a Zen ko

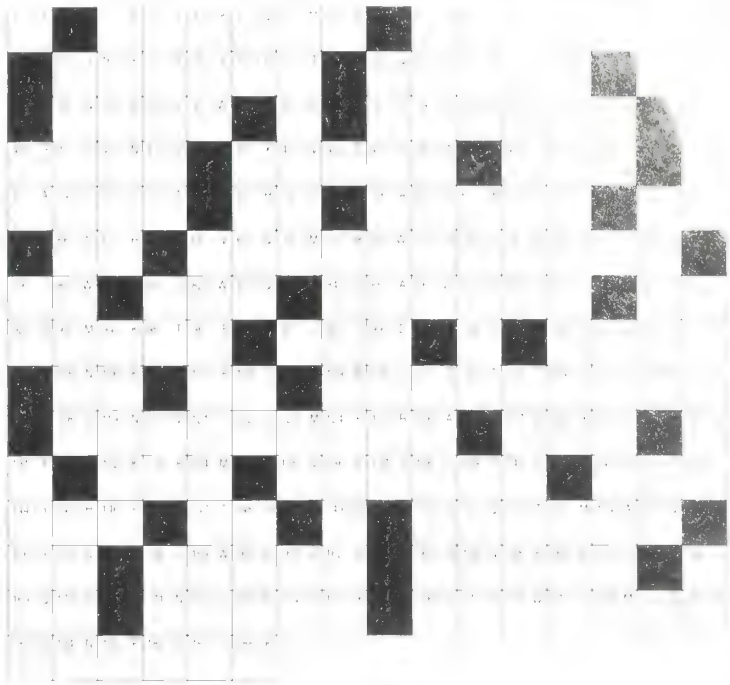
Finally, I rang up a philoso
Columbia, about the deepest i
I know. I said I was at the end
say about a metaphysical quest
that the waters were fast ris
around me. When I told him th
tion, his response was vehemen
almost churlish: "Who *says* the
nothing."

On reflection, I think I s
point. And as I've always said
ing is good enough for me.

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1 *Harper's* research; **2** Annenberg for Communication, Univer Pennsylvania (Philadelphia); petitive Media Reporting (N.Y *Time*-CNN poll (N.Y.C.)/ Yank Partners (Claremont, Calif.); Election and Survey Unit (N.Y. Physicians for a National Program (Boston); **6** Marna Swedish Information Service (N.Y Children's Defense Fund (Washi **8,9** Ken Smikle, *Target Marke* (Chicago); **10** Defense Langu stitute (Monterey, Calif.); **11,12** CNN poll (N.Y.C.)/Yanke Partners (Claremont, Calif.); **1** Hut, Inc. (Wichita, Kans.); **14** Canter, PETA (Rockville, M. *Harper's* research; **16** Female Co. (Chicago); **17,18** *Time* poll (N.Y.C.)/Yankelovich P. (Claremont, Calif.); **19** Pen Schoen Associates (N.Y.C.); **20** Chaffee, Center for Public Int (Washington); **21** The *New York* **22** Center for the American Wom Politics, Eagleton Institute of P Rutgers University (New Brun N.J.); **23** *Women's Day* (N.Y.C.) elovich Clancy Shulman (We Conn.); **24,25** Marcy Lowe, *B Track*, WorldWatch Institute (ington); **26** EPA Office of Sources, Regulatory Program Technology (Ann Arbor, Mich USPIRG (Washington)/Nation vironmental Law Center (Bo **28,29** Federal Emergency Manag Agency (Los Angeles); **30** Greer (San Francisco); **31** Embas Yugoslavia (Washington); **32** Emb Brazil (Washington); **33** Associate (Vilnius, Lithuania); **34** U.S. Service (Chicago); **35** Richard V Kleid Co. (N.Y.C.); **36** Peggy M United Parcel Service (Atlanta Potato Museum (Albuquerque, N.M **38** *Time*-CNN poll (N.Y.C.) /Yan vich Partners (Claremont, Calif.); Larry Harmon Pictures (Los Angele

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 143

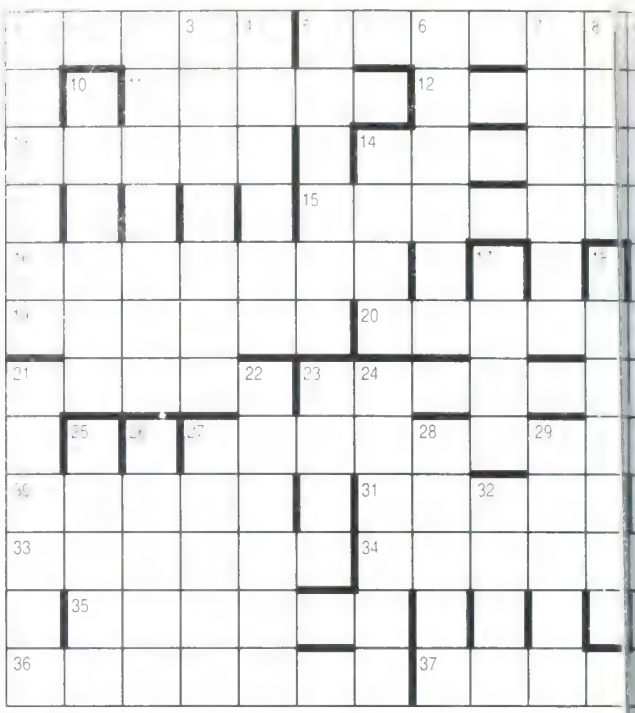


by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author, and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 80.

WORDS								
A. Wiggler, night crawler	117	55	45	126	50	8		
				164	93	20		
B. "Come to my arms, my —" (2 wds., *Through the Looking Glass*)	24	109	181	46	19	118	4	
					127	21	97	
C. Bundles of thread for drawing up warp, etc.	53	139	81	33	24			
D. Eng. Metaphysical poet (1593–1633; "The Temple")	100	140	173	186	99	22	38	
E. Offstage (3 wds.)	183		131	84	96	152	35	108
							14	51
F. Restrain, impede, hobble	114	143	165	18	103	124	88	
G. Consequent, later	92	166	176	34	153	61	3	139
H. Promoting insurrection	67	60	87	12	129	29	24	145
								57
I. Trying to become well-known, perhaps (3 wds.)	54	179	15	78	142	121	158	
J. Norse explorer (fl. 880)	102	49	97	79	167	122	65	
K. Indications of probable trouble	4	132	25	188	10	94	136	
L. Came into full development	110	187	172	158	77	91	43	18
M. Terse saying embodying a general truth	98	35	156	6	133	26	84	2
N. Blister gas used in World War I	28	119	171	105	42	66	184	164
O. Daughter of Latinus, second wife of Aeneas	161	149	141	75	177	130	32	
P. Shrub of the genus *Rhododendron*	154	37	14	193	40	131		
Q. Book of the Old Testament	83	9	37	151	69	5	21	169
R. "We'll hitch Old — to the shay" (Wendell Phillips Garrison, "The One Hoss Shay")	162	17	182	101	115	125		
S. In good shape	111	73	137					
T. Large mass of ice, snow, etc., falling suddenly	152	62	147	174	1	56	20	95
U. Object of care or concern, business; observation	74	47	41	30	58	176	168	
V. Daedalus' creation built to house the Minotaur	135	50	90	63	45	68	7	120
W. Dictatorial, unduly arrogant	159	116	31	11	72	80	82	86
X. E. African state, cap. Kampala	128	36	61	13	175	44		
Y. Pluck	144	89	156	16	113	98		

PUZZLE



[illegible] WHOPI and WHOPI, and the light WHOPI. Note that the [illegible] ping word, not the complete light. Down clueing follows the normal cryptic scheme.

[illegible] word and a two-word phrase, and 36A includes an uncommon word. The solution to last month's puzzle

[illegible]

Thin silk fabric — it's full of holes (6)
Refined variety of quartz (4)
[illegible]
14 [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Material for promoting party where you have to get high
[illegible]
[illegible]
A tweet of hand, in addition (5)
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

3. Showed off device for heating, hops in bed (7)
4. No luck playing in Open (6)
5. Perfectly times drops for the audience (6)
6. Show-off, about 51, bespectacled and studious-looking (6)
7. God shortened female name for biblical land (6)
8. Moderate cause a senator embraces (4)
9. No longer in office, a person isn't liberal with acquittals (12)
12. Polly cooked hot filled pastry (6)
14. Clutch hit (4)
17. Monks perform Mass on Sabbath (4)
18. Gringo's moving love for bullfight injuries (7)
21. Unnatural act: I crave covering of milk … (6)
22. … the first act that could be prone to include energy (6)
23. Neat wrap-up (4)
24. Resume swallowing taste of dark porter (6)
25. Get excited with pronounced style (5)
26. It's good-bye, almost, to a legislator of skill (5)
27. Espouse a tailless dog on point (5)
28. Loafs, but could be working for scale? (5, [illegible])
29. Yankee cut short trips to African nation (5)
32. Foul-sounding liquid-filled vessel (4)

[illegible] Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012
[illegible] Winners of the September puzzle [illegible]
[illegible] Gaithersburg, Maryland

Don't you wish we could just do this.



If we could cut [illegible] if we could cut [illegible] natural gas.

Natural gas-[illegible] cooling equipment cools [illegible] water rather than [illegible] which deplete the ozone layer.

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Clean, economical natural gas. Think what we'll save.


Both were designed by sculptors.
But only one comes fully equipped.
mazda
It Just Feels Right

"Videotape," a short story by Don DeLillo

HARPER'S

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LIFE AS WE KNOW IT
A Father, a Son, and Genetic Destiny
By Michael Bérubé

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Trading the American Dollar Against the American Government
By Ted Fishman

MORALITY PLAYS
Singing Psalms with the White House Choir
By Benjamin DeMott

THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MINE
West Virginia Coal Town
By Yale

Monday Anderson Lets
f Kmart's warehouse spies





Auguste Renoir, *La Grenouillère*, 1869 Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

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FOUNDED IN 1850 VOL. 289, NO. 1735
DECEMBER 1994

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HARPER'S

LETTERS

The View from the Stands

David Guterson, in his essay "Moneyball" [September], properly points out that commercialism and moneygrubbing have all but destroyed the aesthetic pleasure that we once received from watching professional sports. But there is an important dimension missing from his argument: the destruction of the populist tradition among sports fans by the wholesale intrusion of corporate interests into all aspects of the games. For example, the average Joe can no longer step up to the box office and be assured that he will get a seat. Most likely, the place where he would like to sit has been taken by a corporate "sponsor."

The chief reason why the average person can no longer enjoy watching live sports is the innovation of the season ticket. In Washington, D.C., my hometown, every one of the 55,454 seats in RFK Stadium is held by a season-ticket holder (at a price ranging from $240 to $360 per season), and there is a waiting list of nearly 50,000. Thus, the Redskins are not Washington's team; they are the team of a private club of season-ticket holders. This new elitism and exclusivity, which was created by profit-minded sports entrepreneurs, is taking place all across the country. It doesn't seem too far-fetched to envision a future in which there will be a class division among sports viewers just as sharp as anything dreamed by Karl Marx. There will be tho who can afford to spend $100 illion to watch a sporting event l and those with little disposable come, who will have to be conte with the less satisfactory experien of viewing games on television.

Burling Lowrey
Washington, D.C.

In his essay on the commerciali of sports, David Guterson assum that sport is a universally heartf passion, that "sport is a language all speak. . . . Sport is life." Yet the is a minority of men (admittedly small minority) and women f whom sport is meaningless.

Although I am an otherwise ave age American male, I do not sha Guterson's love of sports. His d scription of his rapture while watc ing grown men play a boy's game particularly alienating. Mine was n a sports-minded family, and I w never taught to appreciate the gam that ignited my peers' imaginatior Perhaps my incredible mediocrity the playing fields of youth served immunize me against sport's charm

My deficiencies have continued haunt me into adulthood. Spor talk is a male social lubricant. Aft being introduced to someone, I ofte have awkward moments in whic I'm making conversation and d flecting the inevitable question, "S how about those ——?" Sport is th assumed common denominator, verbal handshake one is expected return. I find myself frequently ho ering on the fringes of workplace di



Do your Christmas shopping in your PJs.

Remember Christmas shopping last year? The traffic, the crowds, the salespeople too harried to help you? It took forever just to get through Gift Wrap.

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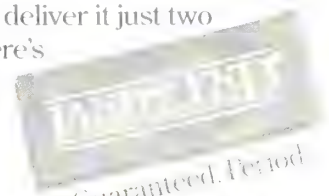
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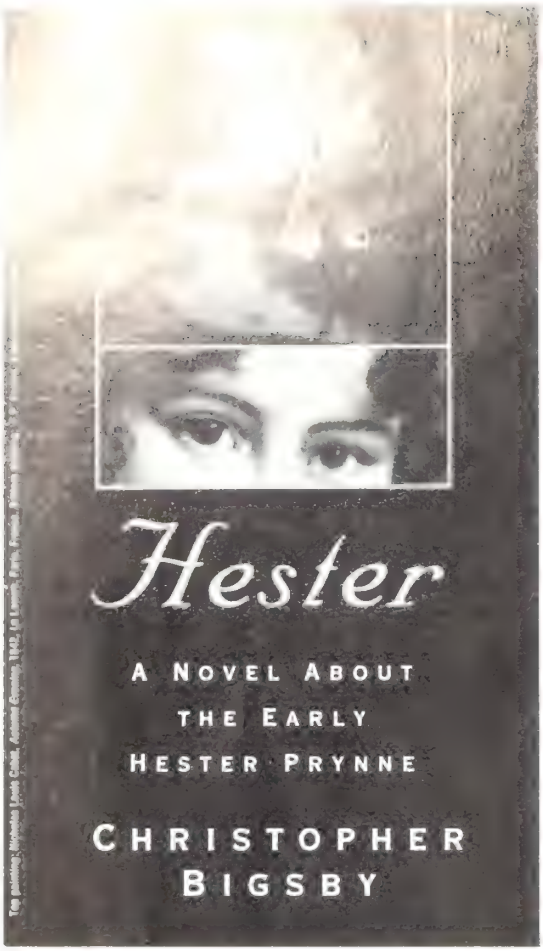
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cussions about a game or a trad
salary dispute. I'm on the ou
clueless. What fascinates them
like minutia to me.

I know there are others wh
afraid to reveal their boredom
pro sports, who memorize a few
names to drop at the appropr
moment in order to hide their
rance. I try to fit in, try to un
stand, but I will always experien
stark wonder at the level of com
ment sport engenders amon
fans.

Michael Palomella
Ridley Park, Pa.

Since emigrating from Rom
to Canada in 1985, I've been t
to unravel the mystical tie betw
North American culture and pr
sional sports. One of my first me
ries here is of traveling to Tor
by tram and being startled by t
passengers who had become exc
by periodic announcements co
over the P.A. system. I later lea
that it was the first time the
Jays had been in the play-offs.

Growing up in Romania, I sp
late nights watching soccer with
father on an old black-and-wh
TV. This past summer, as I watc
the Romanian team do better t
expected in the World Cup, I
ticed that Coca-Cola was the t
nament's official soft drink. Ironi
ly, the team sponsor for Roma
was Pepsi. Marketing, if not dem
racy itself, has arrived comforta
in the post-communist countries.

I can understand the disappo
ment and melancholy that do
nate Guterson's essay. But ev
though I'm a foreigner to this c
ture, I was prepared before I arri
to accept the fact that in the W
political freedom doesn't precl
the tyranny of materialism. *Capi
ism* is the game that everyone n
plays.

Gheorghe Chilsanik
Toronto, Canada

No Admittance

The September Readings secti
contains an item entitled "Say He
to the Class of 1998," which p

to be an excerpt from material
dded by the Columbia Universi-
missions office. I must point out
the information in the intro-
tion is misrepresented in such a
as to seriously mislead prospec-
college freshmen and their fami-
about the admissions process at
mbia College.

rst, the reprinted document was
er sent to any alumni. It was
by the director of admissions in
ntensive on-campus training ses-
for alumni interviewers, to give
n a sense of their value in the
ssions process. We were aware
many misimpressions could be
ted from reading this and other
documents without an experi-
d admissions professional to put
information provided into a con-
which is why it was never put in
lumni manual

econd, this document does not
esent a real student. Rather, it is
ctitious compilation of several
licants and was used to elicit dis-
sion from our workshop partici-
ts. Some were athletes; some
e musicians; some were under-
ievers as measured by the SATs.
h was selected because the ad-
sions decisions about these appli-
ts might not be obvious unless
alumni developed a thorough
lerstanding of our admissions
cess.

hird, if one took this piece from
actual document used in the
kshop, one would have noticed
t "Tom" not only was a football
yer but also had edited his high
ool newspaper and was president
he honor society. One would al-
ave learned that he was from a
h school where we would not
e expected applicants to score
h on the standardized tests and
t despite his scores he ranked
lfth in a class of 206. All these
tors were brought to the atten-
of the alumni in our workshop
made this case an interesting
for discussion purposes.

ast, and most important, this ex-
ple, and indeed the entire format
m which this example sprang,
discontinued in 1989. If "Tom"
been a real applicant, he would
e been a member of the Class of
1993 or earlier, not the Class of 1998. Admissions at institutions like Columbia have changed dramatically over that relatively short span of time, which is why it was decided five years ago that this format for training alumni was no longer the most effective. We now present entire applications of fictitious students during our alumni workshop so that the alumni have even more of the admissions professional's experience and do not make their evaluations on the basis of single-page synopses.

Drusilla Blackman
Dean of Undergraduate Admissions
and Financial Aid
Columbia University
New York City

The editors respond:

Contrary to Ms. Blackman's assertion, and as we stated in our introduction, the document in question *was* sent to Columbia alumni who were interviewing applicants to the university. Our source for the document, a Columbia alumnus, received it in the mail on two separate occasions: once from the Columbia Admissions Office's Boston regional alumni-interview coordinator, and once from the Philadelphia regional coordinator. On each occasion, it was sent as part of a packet of information that constituted the sole preparation alumni interviewers received. Our source received no special training or professional counseling to give context to the document; it was simply mailed out with some supporting material. And despite Ms. Blackman's claim that the document we excerpted has been out of favor since 1989, our source received it from the Philadelphia regional coordinator last year, along with a letter stating that "its analysis of sample write-ups is still timely and valid."

Correction:

Due to an editing error in "Moneyball," by David Guterson [September], the location of the seventh game of the 1994 NBA finals was stated incorrectly. The game was played at the Summit in Houston.





THE BOMBAY SAPPHIRE MARTINI. AS CRAFTED BY STEPHEN DWEC

P O U R S O M E T H I N G P R I C E L E S S

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NOTEBOOK

Art and antiques

By Lewis H. Lapham

ng as we read about revolutions in
s, they all look very nice—like those
capes which, as artistic engravings on
vellum, look so pure and friendly:
heaps engraved on copper do not
and the eye can easily wade through
graved morass.

—Heinrich Heine

Before attending a State Department dinner on the evening of October 6, I had thought that the notions of an exemplary American empire (a city of virtue, light unto the nations, the envy of mankind, et cetera) had dropped below the horizon with the ancient city of Mycenae. By the time the waiters replaced the grilled rockfish with the roast pheasant, I understood that instead of being abandoned or mislaid, the geopolitical romance had been transposed into the realm of domestic form, and during the interval between the champagne and the cassis sorbet I knew that if sometimes I had misjudged American diplomacy over the last thirty years, it was because I had failed to appreciate its character as an art exhibition.

The recognition took me by surprise. Earlier in the evening I had arrived at the building on C Street inclined to feel charitable toward anybody obliged to make foreign policy in a world where the old portfolio of theory so seldom speaks to the new facts of facts. Together with the reports from Haiti, the newspapers that morning mentioned the mutilated bodies of twenty Bosnian Serbs on Mount Igman southwest of Sarajevo, a civil war in Liberia, a political assassination in Mexico, and a rumor of Qaddafi troops massing on the border of Egypt. Given so many emergent and simultaneous occasions, in what sort of perspective was it possible to fix the coordinates of a national interest? The traditional practice of diplomacy assumed the existence of frontiers meant to hold in check the movement of peoples and the passage of time, but the velocity of modern communications joined with the weight of mass immigration yields a new equation of human energy. It is an equation that presents the rulers of large and supposedly sovereign states with a hard problem in political mechanics. If nothing is foreign and nobody is an alien, then with what set of blueprints does the state construct such a thing as a foreign policy?

The questions accompanied me as far as the elevator hall on the eighth floor, the first of the sixteen reception rooms, each of them splendidly furnished in the architectural style of the late eighteenth century that occupy the whole of the building's uppermost floor and contain the State Department's permanent exhibition of early American virtue. Admiring the Roman architraves framing the elevator doors and being careful not to walk too heavily on the King of Prussia marble (the largest expanse of such marble known to mortal man), I proceeded through a gallery and another entrance hall (both passages distinguished by the presence of rare and priceless furniture), and so into the John Quincy Adams State Drawing Room, where a string quartet was playing the music of Haydn. Under the arched fanlight in the south wall, George F. Kennan, the evening's guest of honor, stood in a receiving line with Strobe Talbott, the deputy secretary of state, and as I waited my turn to shake hands with the two men, I had a good deal of time in which to reflect upon the provenience of both the paintings and the other guests.

The two sets of forms didn't agree with each other, either in character or in historical period. The objects in the room were representative of the early American republic—Gilbert Stuart's portrait of John Quincy Adams by Benjamin West and Charles Willson Peale, Thomas Jefferson's writing desk, a silver bowl made by Paul Revere. The people in the room were servants of the American nation-state—individuals on the order of Robert S. McNamara and Richard Helms and Katharine Graham—who had inherited the presumptions of quasi-imperial grandeur that the United States had found among the other spoils of victory in the Second World War. Almost without exception they belonged to the American oligarchy, the kind of people who own banks and racehorses and newspapers, and for all their liberal spirit and apt to define liberty as the power of money rather than the freedom of mind. Roughly one hundred in number, the guests graciously accepted glasses of wine and mineral water handed around on silver trays and exchanged the small tokens of the day's gossip—about the sad figure of Warren Christopher, the secretary of state (humiliated by former President Jimmy Carter in the Haitian negotiations), about President Clinton (vanishing like the Cheshire cat), about Bosnia (a tragic story), about gunboats (very expensive to maintain).

Over the shoulders of a woman in a black taffeta dress, I noticed McNamara standing under Charles Leslie's portrait of John Quincy Adams, and I remembered that during the Vietnam War he had thought that by teaching the natives the arithmetic of kill ratios and body counts the United States could transform them into loyal subjects of the American Express card. Adams, in his Fourth of July speech in 1821, had made a quite different point—the republican as opposed to the imperial argument—saying that America didn't go abroad "in search of monsters to de-

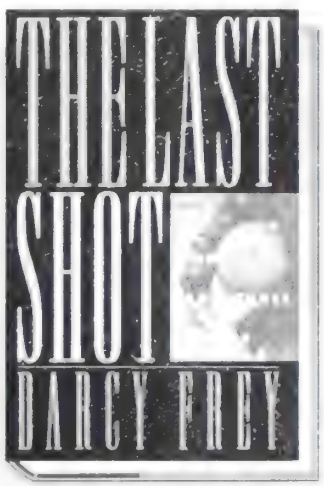
GREAT BOOKS THAT STARTED HERE

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"A memoir of great beauty [and] exquisite, unblinking intelligence."
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author of *Rameau's Niece*

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New York Times Book Review



"A story about young men and their dreams built on basketball.... Darcy Frey writes with the kind of grace and clarity that can't be faked.... An unusually moving book."

"A classic. I wish I'd written it."

Darcy Frey's Harper's *article also won a Boston Award for Young Journalists*

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

enlist under [illegible], "were [illegible] of foreign independence, we would involve ourself beyond the power of extrications, [illegible] interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy and [illegible]."

The difference between the two [illegible] the American purpose was the difference between people who think they can buy the future and those who have the courage to imagine it. The founders of the Republic expected America to rise as a power in the world not because of its fleets or its armies but because of its experiments, and they defined liberty not as the freedom to conquer but as the freedom to make and think and build. Their heirs and assigns tend to think of liberty as a dangerous and probably criminal substance, something best placed under surveillance or preserved behind glass.

Thinking that Adams's remark might well have been addressed to Jean-Bertrand Aristide or the Emir of Kuwait, I further remembered that I most recently had come across it in a speech that Kennan delivered in March to the Council on Foreign Relations, and on reaching the head of the receiving line it occurred to me that of all the people in the room he probably was the closest in temperament to the Doric entablatures and the Chippendale chairs. The most eminent as well as the most senior of the country's statesmen, Kennan had entered the foreign service in 1927, in the last years of the Coolidge Administration, and throughout the [illegible] he had argued against the grand simplifications so beloved by the managers of the national security state. At the age of ninety he stood with the strength and bearing of a much younger man, still persuaded that the United States needed sound principles rather than global strategies, that it was better advised to learn the contingent lessons of history than to proclaim the slogans of a world-encircling dogma. During the Second World War he was posted to the American embassy in Moscow, and in 1947, under the pseudonym "Mr. X," he published an [illegible] in *Foreign Affairs* [illegible] the theory of containing the Sov[illegible] presence in Europe ("by the alert and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographic points") from which [illegible] American presidents subsequently derived the premise of the Cold War. Kennan intended the policy of containment as an expedient and temporary measure, a diplomatic task preliminary to useful discussion. Nor had he expected it to become the justification for a permanent state of military readiness. Appalled and embarrassed by so gross a misreading of his text, Kennan resigned from the State Department in 1953, and, except for a brief term as ambassador to Yugoslavia in 1961–63, he has devoted the last forty years to the teaching of diplomatic history at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

For at least thirty of those years the State Department has been reconstructing its masterpiece of stagnant design, and despite the distractions of three undeclared wars, and in the midst of God knows how many bomb alarms, interruptions, rebellions, unarmed interventions, the great hum apparently has never ceased, even since that awful day in January 1961 when Mary Caroline Herter, the wife of the secretary of state during the Eisenhower Administration, burst into tears at the prospect of receiving the queen of Greece in rooms that reminded her of an airport lounge. The unhappy woman had a point. The State Department building never has been admired as a work of architecture, and even the *New York Times*, a paper ordinarily willing to forgive the government its failures of policy or taste, once pronounced it "utterly banal, institutional, and graceless . . . at best a credible period piece from the early 1950's." The original reception rooms expressed the commercial aesthetic of the early Holiday Inn—wall-to-wall carpeting on concrete floors, the exterior walls of glass and steel—and Mrs. Herter, who had been brought up as a Standard Oil heiress, was unaccustomed to turquoise drapes. To an attending aide de camp she said, "I've never been so mortified in my life as an American woman."

...e secretary's wife was con...
...ed with the questions of etr...
...e, but as the work of decoration
...gressed, room by room and
...ed ceiling by carved ceiling, it
...ired a didactic purpose. What
...been begun as a show of mun...
...became an uplifting text ex...
...sed in the language of architec...
...ornament, a gallery of sermons
...nded to improve and edify the
...times brutal or loutish heads of
...arriving in Washington from
...ess fortunate places of the earth.
...he work swelled and expanded
...r the same period of time in
...ch the State Department was
...dily being diminished as an in...
...ment of moral, intellectual, or
...tical force. A succession of
...erican presidents got into the
...it of making their own foreign
...cy in the basement of the White
...se, preferably in secret and often
...out reference either to the Con...
...tion or a reliable map; the larger
...ks and transnational corpora...
...s, like the fiefs and principalities
...nedieval Europe, arranged their
...nces and détentes through the
...assies of their own overseas sub...
...aries, and only after the treaties
...been signed did they look to the
...ks at the State Department to
...t the press releases. But even as
...office of the secretary of state was
...ng reduced in both power and
...x, the workmen on the eighth
...r—carpenters, stonemasons, plas...
...rs, furniture restorers, painters—
...e busily concealing the futility of
...e present with the glorious facade
...me past.

On the way to dinner through the
...omas Jefferson State Reception
...m, most of the guests paused to
...ire the carving of a gilded eagle,
...magnificence of the Turkish rug,
...plaster bust of John Paul Jones.
...ading with the others in the dress
...le of American privilege and
...ing opinion, I wondered whether
...were part of the exhibit—like
...vernor De Witt Clinton's china
...es or Copely's portrait of Mrs.
...n Montresor (in red riding habit
... velvet hat)—or whether we
...e meant to take from the display
...same kind of instruction directed
...ersonages as various as Manuel Noriega, the king of Saudi Arabia, and the late Ferdinand Marcos. Had Noriega returned to Panama with the thought of submitting his political enemies to less strenuous regimens of torture? Would Richard Holbrooke or Strobe Talbott disavow their knowledge of caviar or send their children to public schools? Did everybody present know that the entire art collection was worth $75 million? That the pedimented glass doors had been copied from designs made for Jefferson's house at Monticello? These latter advisories were probably a good deal more urgent than anything being done or said in Baghdad or Port-au-Prince, but what was the lesson to be learned, and how did it affect the prices of *gouaches* at Sotheby's?

The string quartet followed the guests into the Benjamin Franklin State Dining Room, and as the dinner ran its course the music proceeded from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, arriving with the coffee at the terminus of Brahms. The windows in the south wall overlooked the Lincoln Memorial and the Potomac River, and in the distances of the autumn night I knew that the radio frequencies and television broadcast bands were loud with incoherent signals—not only the coded transmissions arriving on the State Department's lower tiers from Kigali and Zagreb but also Rush Limbaugh preaching the gospel of an imbecile realpolitik and Oliver North campaigning for election in Virginia on a platform of grinning and bald-faced lies. The voices were as many and as disparate as their points of origin and degrees of amplification, but heard together in chorus they were questioning the democratic premises of the American idea as well as the doctrines of American exceptionalism and the symbols of American supremacy, and who among all the important people in that important room knew what to say by way of an answer? In place of words, they had a collection of antiques. The parliament of images handsomely illustrated the book of American virtue, but in all that brilliant assembly of marble console tables, Chinese ex-

...ors
and block...
...ket...

Warren C...
of st...
coffee...
speech...
body else...
vertisement...
democracy as if it were a brand...
detergent justly famous for its...
bility and resolve. C...
by saying that both Yeltsin...
and Boris Yeltsin had passed safely through Washington during the previous six days, and because they had come and gone without incident and because as yet no American soldier had been killed in Haiti, "peacemaking has had a bad week." He was glad to report that in the final decade of the century denominated as America's own, the national ship of state had weathered the really difficult storms—the ones that George Kennan's generation had confronted in Korea and Eastern Europe—and had come at last into smooth water and easy sailing. New markets for democracy were opening up in Asia and Latin America, and the success of the Haitian expedition had shown what could be done with some first-rate sentiment, enough helicopter gunships, and 20,000 combat troops.

The guests rewarded Christopher with a gust of imperial applause, and Kennan, speaking in the dry and piping voice of an emeritus professor, followed with a brief parable about a buzzing fly that imagined itself a great king. Borrowed from an old Chinese text, the story served as a subtle correction of the evening's grander moments, but most of the guests were seated so softly on the cushions of self-congratulation that they missed the point about the vanity of princes and applauded Kennan as admiringly as they had viewed the colonial silver and the remnants of the American Revolution. Weighed in the scale of value held up by the style section of the *Washington P...* (i.e., the standard measure of judgment accepted by most of the people in the room), Kennan was a priceless antique, as rare in his own way as any of the other objects in the State Department's collection. ■


Both were designed by sculptors.
But only one comes fully equipped.
mazda
It Just Feels Right.

HARPER'S INDEX

Average value of a merger or acquisition among major U.S. hospital chains this year : +5

Portion of all for-profit U.S. hospitals now owned by the two largest hospital chains : 1/5

Ratio of the price of an ounce of gold to that of an ounce of Zofran, a new anti-nausea drug : 1

Hours of psychotherapy California's Contra Costa County exchanged for each handgun turned in th

k of "bad communication" among the most common reasons cited by the LAPD for "errors in shooting" I

eeks in jail served by a Polish journalist in 1992 for calling Solidarity leaders "politicos," "careerists," and "slopes" :

aximum jail sentence, in years, for publicly denying the existence of the Holocaust, according to a new German l

Price of 3.4 ounces of Guilt, a new cologne from The Territory Ahead, a Santa Barbara company : $38

hances that a black suspect pictured on a network TV evening news program will be shown in police custody : 1 in 3

Chances that a white suspect will be : 1 in 6

Percentage change since 1983 in the number of opinions issued by the Supreme Court : –44

Percentage change since 1983 in the number of petitions filed with the Court : +53

ets of uncut dollar bills bought from the Treasury Department last year for use as wrapping paper by a Japanese florist : 500

Portion of the world's currency reserves that are in U.S. dollars : 3/5 (see page 61)

Average percentage change in a shareholder's earnings during a company's acquisition : +20

ances that an American believes the federal government should take "primary responsibility" for eliminating poverty : 1 in 3

Chances that an American in 1964 believed the government had a responsibility to eliminate poverty : 3 in 4

Rank of the local, state, and federal governments among the top three employers in Indianapolis : 1,2,3 (see page 34)

Number of industrialized countries whose manufacturers pay higher wages than those in the United States : 9

Percentage of Americans who believe non-unionized workers are likely to be fired for organizing a union drive : 79

Portion of factories operating in Haiti that are owned by U.S. companies : 1/3

Number of Haiti's 42 leaders since independence who have been murdered, deposed, or forced to flee the country : 30

Number of CIA stations in Africa that the agency has closed this year : 15

Chances that a domestic U.S. military base ordered closed in 1988 remains open : 1 in 3

io of the rate of missing inventory at the Pentagon's gift shop last year to the average rate at an American gift shop : 3:2

Number of weeks Danielle Steel employed a full-time gift-wrapper last year for her seven children's birthdays : 7

Rank of teaching, among the most common previous professions of romance writers : 1

Percentage of American children who say they use flattery to get their parents to buy them things : 16

Percentage who say they "act depressed" : 10

Chances that an American smoker acquired the habit by the age of fourteen : 2 in 5

Percentage of Americans who believe they will get cancer : 59

Percentage who believe they are likely to get AIDS : 4

Rank of drug overdose, among the most common causes of accidental death in San Francisco last year : 1

Factor by which the mortality rate of homeless urban non-white Americans exceeds that of housed non-whites : 2

Factor by which the mortality rate of homeless urban white Americans exceeds that of housed whites : 5

Number of blocks from Tiffany's that thieves tried to sell goods stolen from the New York store this fall : 10

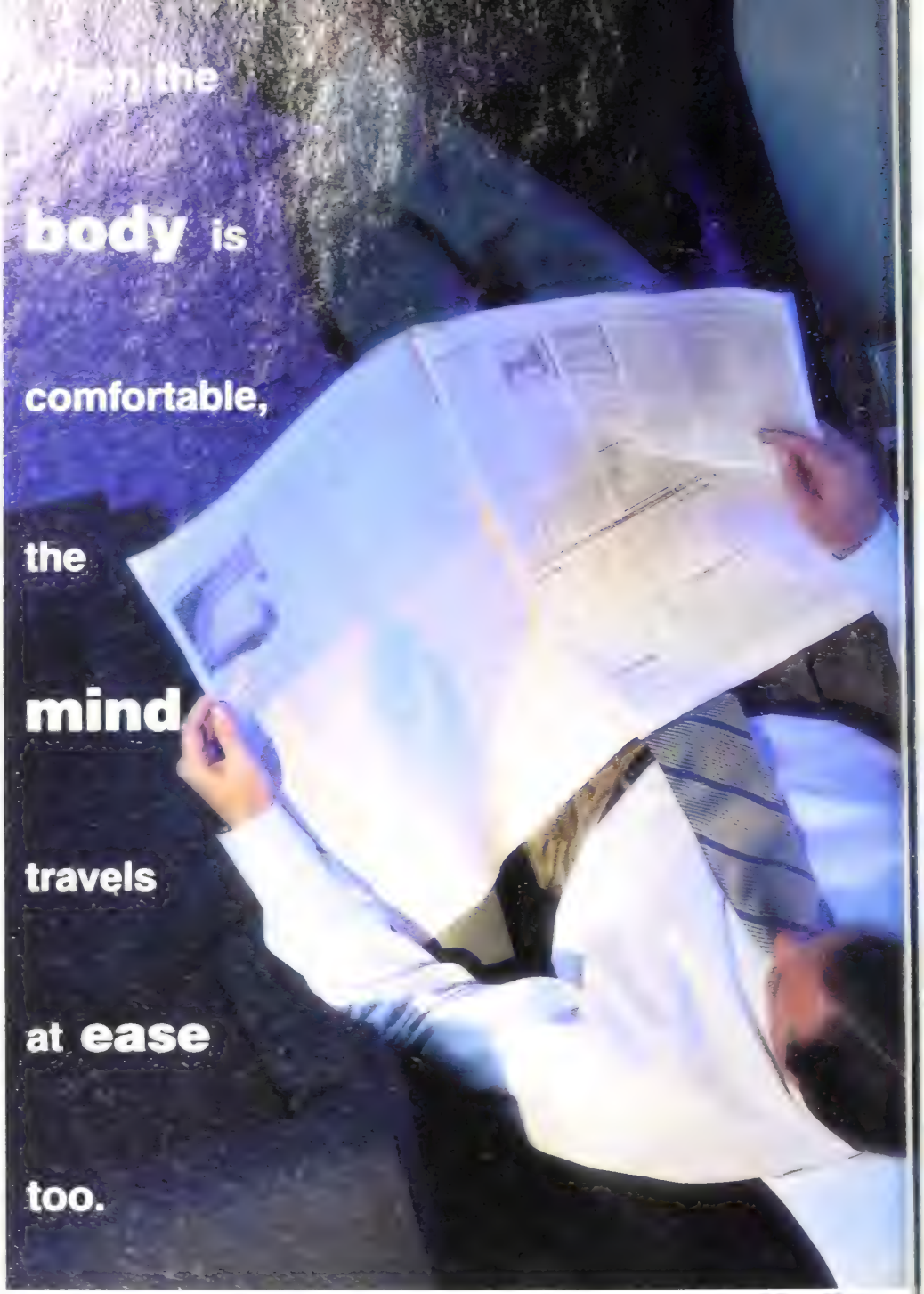
Chances that a Santa Claus appearing in a mall this month has a college degree : 2 in 3

Price of a 12-gram canister of frankincense and a 7-gram canister of myrrh, from a Maryland company : $34.95

Price paid at auction this year for Elvis Presley's American Express card : $41,500

Figures cited are the latest available as of October 1, 1994 — sources are listed on page 70.

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READINGS

[Story]

VIDEOTAPE

By Don DeLillo. From the Autumn issue of Antaeus, *the journal's final issue. DeLillo's most recent novel is* Mao II; *his story "Pafko at the Wall" appeared in the October 1992 issue of* Harper's Magazine.

It shows a man driving a car. It is the simplest sort of family video. You see a man at the wheel of a medium Dodge.

It is just a kid aiming her camera through the rear window of the family car at the windshield of the car behind her.

You know about families and their video cameras. You know how kids get involved, how the camera shows them that every subject is potentially charged, a million things they never see with the unaided eye. They investigate the meaning of inert objects and dumb pets and they poke at family privacy. They learn to see things twice.

It is the kid's own privacy that is being protected here. She is twelve years old and her name is being withheld even though she is neither the victim nor the perpetrator of the crime but only the means of recording it.

It shows a man in a sport shirt at the wheel of his car. There is nothing else to see. The car approaches briefly, then falls back.

You know how children with cameras learn to work the exposed moments that define the family cluster. They break every trust, spy out the undefended space, catching Mom coming out of the bathroom in her cumbrous robe and turbaned towel, looking bloodless and plucked. It is not a joke. They will shoot you sitting on the pot if they can manage a suitable vantage.

The tape has the jostled sort of noneventness that marks the family product. Of course the man in this case is not a member of the family but a stranger in a car, a random figure, someone who has happened along in the slow lane.

It shows a man in his forties wearing a pale shirt open at the throat, the image washed by reflections and sunglint, with many jostled moments.

It is not just another video homicide. It is a homicide recorded by a child who thought she was doing something simple and maybe halfway clever, shooting some tape of a man in a car.

He sees the girl and waves briefly, wagging a hand without taking it off the wheel—an underplayed reaction that makes you like him.

It is unrelenting footage that rolls on and on. It has an aimless determination, a persistence that lives outside the subject matter. You are looking into the mind of home video. It is innocent, it is aimless, it is determined, it is real.

He is bald up the middle of his head, a nice guy in his forties whose whole life seems open to the handheld camera.

But there is also an element of suspense. You keep on looking not because you know something is going to happen—of course you do know something is going to happen and you do look for that reason but you might also keep on looking if you came across this footage for the first time without knowing the outcome. There is a crude power operating here. You keep on looking because things combine to hold you fast—a sense of the random, the amateurish, the accidental, the impending. You don't think of the tape as boring or interesting. It is crude, it is blunt, it is relentless. It is the jostled part of your mind, the film that runs through your hotel brain under all the thoughts you know you're thinking.

The world is lurking in the camera, already framed, waiting for the boy or girl who will come along and take up the device, learn the

hen he will be hit. It is something, nat-
y, that you wait for. You say to your wife,
re at home and she is there, Now here is
ere he gets it. You say, Janet, hurry up, this
here it happens.

Now here is where he gets it. You see him
ilted, sort of wireshocked—then he seizes up
nd falls toward the door or maybe leans or
lies into the door is the proper way to put it.
s awful and unremarkable at the same time.
The car stays in the slow lane. It approaches
briefly, then falls back.

You don't usually call your wife over to the TV set. She has her programs, you have yours. But there's a certain urgency here. You want her to see how it looks. The tape has been running forever and now the thing is finally going to happen and you want her to be here when he's shot.

Here it comes, all right. He is shot, headshot, and the camera reacts, the child reacts—there is a jolting movement but she keeps on taping, there is a sympathetic response, a nerve response, her heart is beating faster but she keeps the camera trained on the subject as he slides into the door and even as you see him die you're thinking of the girl. At some level the girl has to be present here, watching what you're watching, unprepared—the girl is seeing this cold and you have to marvel at the fact that she keeps the tape rolling.

It shows something awful and unaccompanied. You want your wife to see it because it is real this time, not fancy movie violence—the realness beneath the layers of cosmetic perception. Hurry up, Janet, here it comes. He dies so fast. There is no accompaniment of any kind. It is very stripped. You want to tell her it is realer than real but then she will ask what that means.

The way the camera reacts to the gunshot—a startle reaction that brings pity and terror into the frame, the girl's own shock, the girl's identification with the victim.

You don't see the blood, which is probably trickling behind his ear and down the back of his neck. The way his head is twisted away from the door, the twist of the head gives you only a partial profile and it's the wrong side, it's not the side where he was hit.

And maybe you're being a little aggressive here, practically forcing your wife to watch. Why? What are you telling her? Are you making a little statement? Like I'm going to ruin your day out of ordinary spite. Or a big statement? Like this is the risk of existing. Either way you're rubbing her face in this tape and you don't know why.

It shows the car drifting toward the guardrail and then there's a jostling sense of two other lanes and part of another car, a split-sec-





"Mark Thomas [illegible] Pan [illegible] Park [illegible] Age [illegible] Art [illegible] Rights [illegible] in New York City. Gentl lives in New York City.

ond blur, and the tape ends here, either because the girl stopped shooting or because some central authority, the police or the district attorney or the TV station, decided there was nothing else you had to see.

This is either the tenth or eleventh homicide committed by the Texas Highway Killer. The number is uncertain because the police believe that one of the shootings may have been a copycat crime.

And there is something about videotape, isn't there, and this particular kind of serial crime? This is a crime designed for random taping and immediate playing. You sit there and wonder if this kind of crime became more possible when the means of taping and playing an event—playing it immediately after the taping—became part of the culture. The principal doesn't necessarily commit the sequence of crimes in order to see them taped and played. He commits the crimes as if they were a form of taped-and-played event. The crimes are inseparable from the idea of taping and playing. You sit there thinking that this is a crime that has found its medium, or vice versa—cheap mass production, the sequence of repeated images and victims, stark and glary and more or less unremarkable.

It shows very little in the end. It is a famous murder because it is on tape and because the murderer has done it many times and because the time we recorded he killed [illegible] the child is involved, the Video Kid as she is sometimes called because they have to call her something. The tape is famous and so is she. She is famous in the modern manner of people whose names are strategically withheld. They are famous without names or faces, spirits living apart from their bodies, the victims and witnesses, the underage criminals, out there somewhere at the edges of perception.

Seeing someone at the moment he dies, dying unexpectedly. This is reason alone to stay tuned to the screen. It is instructional, watching a man shot dead as he drives along on a sunny day. It demonstrates an elemental truth, that every breath you take has two possible endings. And that's another thing. There's a joke locked away here, a note of cruel slapstick that you are completely willing to appreciate. Maybe the victim's a chump, a dope, classically unlucky. He had it coming, in a way, like an innocent fool in a silent movie.

You don't want Janet to give you any crap about it's on all the time, they show it a thousand times a day. They show it because it exists, because they have to show it, because this is why they're out there. The horror freezes your soul but this doesn't mean that you want them to stop.

GUIDELINES FOR THE GAMEBOYS

Benign Immobilization refers to an act that [illegible] any being or object depicted as feeling, thinking, or self-aware) in a way that does not demonstrate any death, discomfort, harm, or pain. It includes sentient beings falling or being pushed off a ledge so that they fall off screen, as long as there are no audible signs of death or pain. Benign Immobilization may also include [illegible] out a concluding "plop." It cannot include pictures of the result of falling, but it may include pictures of a sentient being being carried off by angels or flying "up to heaven" with wings.

• The covering of sentient beings with ooze or slime, as in the "sliming" of Gruzzles in the [illegible]

• The catching of sentient beings in a net, as in the catching of pixies in the game "Trea-[illegible]

• "Finishing moves," such as the ripping out [illegible]

• The eating of a dead body.

• The placing of a sentient being inside a [illegible] cry of a body, poked full of [illegible]

BLOOD AND GORE

Depiction of a great quantity of a sentient being's blood or what a reasonable person would consider to be vital body fluids, or depiction of innards, organs, and/or dismembered body parts. The depiction of blood or vital body fluids must be shown as flowing, spurting, flying, or collecting in large amounts or in pools. To be classified as Blood and Gore, there must be *more* than just simple dismemberment; the dismemberment must be accompanied by tendons, veins, bones, muscles, etc.

Examples:

• A sentient being is thrown in a tree chopper and is spewed out as hamburger

• A sentient being loses an arm, showing parts of the bone, oozing fluids, tendons, and veins

• A human is shot in the head, and blood and brains fly in all directions

• A sentient being has its heart ripped from its chest and shown to it

[Surveillance Reports]

UNDER KMART'S WATCHFUL EYE

From reports submitted in 1992 and 1993 to managers at Kmart Corporation's Manteno, Illinois, warehouse by Confidential Investigative Consultants, a Chicago-based private-investigation firm that had sent investigators to the warehouse, at Kmart's request, to pose as employees and gather information. The reports are at the center of an ongoing suit, filed in the Circuit Court of Cook County by forty-three Kmart workers, that accuses Kmart of violating state privacy law by "setting up a pervasive spy network to report on the private actions of [workers], not only at work, but also outside of work and, in some instances, in their homes." In a related matter, the Teamsters have filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board alleging that Kmart hired the investigators to monitor unionizing activities, a federal offense. Kmart management claims that the operatives were "investigat[ing] excessive waste" at the warehouse; a Kmart spokesperson said that the company occasionally uses private investigators "if we believe there's something going on that we need to look into."

September 30, 1992: I-1258 [a male investigator] participated in the daily five-minute exercise program with the housekeeping/maintenance crew in order to become acquainted with the staff. I-1258 was introduced to his su-

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A WOMAN IN TORON
OF THE KIDS TO GRAN
BECAUSE HE GOT WARPED A STOCKBROKER IN
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drinking during working hours. No employees were observed drinking at this time.

[illegible] 2: I-1258 proceeded to the [illegible] can Legion in Bradley, Illinois, with M and P. M ordered a pitcher of beer. P began talking about himself. He stated that he had been involved in the Vietnam War for three years. He later stated that all Vietnam veterans have guns and that he owns a .44 magnum and a Dillinger.

November 2: While on break, I-1258 overheard three employees talking about how they are treated at work. A female employee stated, "We're just warm bodies to them," meaning the management. A black male stated, "We're like used tools to them." Previous information reveals that the three work in repack. I-1258 will attempt to discover more from the three employees when possible.

November 30: I-1258 arrived at the site and went to work in the modules [product-routing areas]. I-1258 conversed with B [a male employee], who stated that he had been searching for a new job and had applied at a few places. He stated that he would receive word on Friday about a position at an ice-cream-manufacturing plant. Nothing further was discussed.

December 6: I-1258 observed several employees complaining about having to wear hair nets.

December 8: Two black males continually bump into I-1299 [a female investigator] when walking by. I-1299 will attempt to learn their names. Also, a black male named W was conversing with a black female instead of working. W was carrying an empty box with him to make it appear as though he were working.

December 18: I-1299 observed K [a male employee] and S [a female employee] congregating in an overly friendly manner at lunch. An elderly lady [employee] named U stated to I-1299 that she "wouldn't be surprised if they are having an affair." She also advised I-1299 to be careful of what I-1299 says to S, because S often reports people to management.

After lunch, I-1299 overheard two male employees expressing negative attitudes about the treatment of employees at the facility. I-1299 could not listen to the details due to the nature of her work at the time. I-1299 conversed briefly with a heavyset male, name unknown. The male started to say something about L, one of the supervisors, but hesitated, as he was not acquainted with I-1299. I-1299 will attempt to identify and build a rapport with the male.

December 28: I-1258 has overheard talk among the younger employees about parties going on and will attempt to accompany them in an attempt to discover information.

January 4, 1993: I-1299 observed A [a male employee] drop some deodorant on the floor. Instead of picking it up he kicked it under the shelf. I-1299 will monitor him to determine if this is something he does regularly.

January 20: During inventory nobody was talking, so I-1299 didn't receive any information. But I-1299 did get a chance to talk to E [a female employee] (the woman who wanted to take time off so that her baby could get an operation) about kids and other female things. I-1299 feels that I-1299 will get the information we need in time.

January 24: I-1258 departed site and proceeded to meet Q [a male employee] at the Legion. I-1258 and Q conversed about hunting and fishing. Q said that he used to go hunting with his father, but when he was supposed to shoot a rabbit or something of that nature, he would miss on purpose. He also stated a dislike for catching fish, as he believed it was cruel. He further stated that if a thief was going to kill him, he would shoot the thief; however, he stated that if the thief only wanted to rob him and not kill him, he would just let it happen.

March 15: I-1299 worked in the modules for an hour and noticed some empty candy wrappers on the floor. I-1299 attempted to pick them up, but there were too many people in the area. V [a female employee] was saying

[Pep Talk]

CHEERING UP THE GUILTY LOGGER

From "Your Work Is Valuable to Global Environment," by Carl Jansen, in the September issue of Timber Processing, *a trade magazine for the timber industry. Jansen is a recruiter for various timber companies.*

As a participant in the forest-products industry, have you ever reflected on how your efforts help to improve the global environment?

Almost all scientists agree that we are experiencing global warming due to increased amounts of carbon dioxide in the air. We in the forest-products industry have a significant impact on reducing that carbon dioxide. Consider how trees grow: they grow by absorbing carbon dioxide. When wood is burned as fuel, that carbon dioxide is returned to the atmosphere.

We in the timber industry are carbon stewards; we convert trees into building materials and other products that last a very, very long time. Have you ever considered the fact that by producing buildings or furniture we are actually keeping carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere? When we convert a seventy-year-old tree into a building product we are extending the carbon-preservation time frame significantly. The resulting buildings could be with us for centuries: in Europe there are a number of well-preserved wooden structures that are more than 800 years old, and in New England there are houses and commercial buildings that are more than 400 years old. In the U.S. and Canada we have built over 110 million housing units, amounting to an estimated 880 million tons of trapped carbon.

Moreover, without proper management, forests are consumed by forest fires, which release significant volumes of carbon dioxide back into the air. Only by trapping carbon dioxide in a wood product can we as a society prevent the rerelease of that carbon dioxide.

We in the forest-products industry should be very proud of our mission: planting trees and converting mature timber into products for relatively permanent use by consumers around the world. In your conversations with people outside our industry, try to incorporate these issues in order to show how important our industry is to the global environmental picture.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

A

TARGETING THE STONED CYBERPUNK

From a report, prepared earlier this year by the Interval Research Corporation, about marketing possibilities at the fourth annual Lollapalooza, the "alternative rock" and cultural festival that tours the United States each summer. The report was intended to help organize and market the festival's Electric Carnival, an exhibit designed to allow festivalgoers to experiment with video and computer technology, including digitally altering their own voices and images. The exhibit was financed, at a reported $2 million, by Interval founder Paul Allen, a computer entrepreneur. An excerpt from the report appeared in the third issue of Might, *a San Francisco magazine.*

Who are the 15,000 to 30,000 people per concert who are the audience for the Electric Carnival?

They include "hippies," "cyberpunks," "headbangers," "wannabees," the younger "Rave" audience (mostly youth from eleven to seventeen), and older "weekend warriors." The large majority are sixteen to twenty-four.

What do we know about the majority group (sixteen to twenty-four), and what does it imply for a successful exhibit?

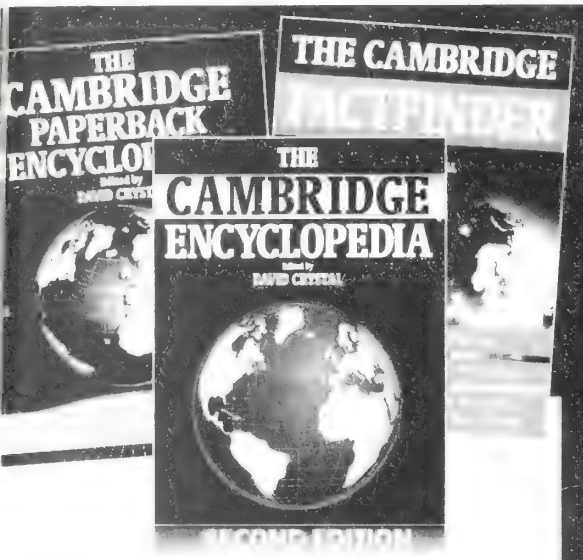
1. Their common preoccupation is the question of personal identity. They are largely self-absorbed and extremely focused on personal appearance. But they are vaguely aware that identity is primarily a construct of culture and family conditioning, variables over which they have little control. This leaves them feeling personally anxious and socially powerless (the Slacker angst). They are likely to be interested in exhibits that allow them to control the various elements of personal identity.

2. They feel marginal to mainstream society (although they are overwhelmingly white and close enough to the middle class to afford the $30 festival-admission fee). Thus the Electric Carnival needs to look and feel very different from school- or office-based experiences. The tent and all the elements in it should reflect a countercultural aesthetic.

3. Shocking parents, family, friends, and community is often a part of this group's self-definition process. They will want a record of the most socially unacceptable image of themselves to freak out their parents. We need to provide at least one printout of their self-creation. Ideally, this would be tied to completion and return of a survey after leaving the tent.

4. They don't want to fail, especially in public. Thus we need to set them up for success.

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IN DEFENSE OF THE SELLOUT

From "The Big Sellouts," a list of musicians and their artistic and commercial compromises, compiled by Chuck Eddy. The list appeared in "Rock and Madison Avenue: In Bed and Having Fun," an article by Eddy in the Summer issue of millennium pops, *a "quarterly journal on popular culture" published in Somerville, Massachusetts. According to Eddy, a music critic for* Rolling Stone *and* The Village Voice, *selling out is "a hallowed pop music tradition"; he argues that "basically 'selling out' means changing your music, usually opening it up to previously unpermitted sounds, to reach a new, larger audience and perhaps to challenge the cult that used to love you."*

Vernon Dalhart: Conservatory-trained Texas [illegible] York in the early 1920s and trades Puccini for hillbilly music. Covers Henry Whitter's "The Wreck of the Old '97." It sells 6 million copies, the best-selling 78-rpm country record ever. In photos he looks uncannily like Garth [illegible]. Starts out by helping invent Dixieland jazz and worldbeat (with "King of the Zulus" and "Cornet Chop Suey") and leads the way toward R&B and rock and roll. By 1929, no black musician anywhere is more popular. Winds up four decades later doing happy-face swill like "Hello, Dolly!" and "What a Wonderful World."

Xavier Cugat: Rationalized his popular early-1950s cocktail-mambo crossover rhumbas by saying, "I would rather play 'Chiquita Banana' and have my swimming pool than play Bach and starve."

Elvis Presley: Sacrifices rockabilly power for pop polish when he moves from Sun Records to RCA in 1956; sells out later to bossa nova, patriotic stuff, show tunes, dance numbers about clams, you name it. He defined rock and roll by being the furthest thing from a purist rock and roll has ever known.

Sam Cooke: Sings in choirs for years, then makes his sacred-to-secular sellout in 1956; a year later, tops pop charts. He paved the way for later sellouts-from-God, including the Staple Singers, Stryper, and Amy Grant. All of these performers got better when they sold out.

The Beatles: Abandoned original grimy Liverpool hoodlum-and-hooligan audience by letting their gay manager dress them in collarless suits and Chelsea boots and adopting an image as adorable Little Lord Fauntleroys even your mom could love. Became more popular than Jesus Christ, made rock and roll (and selling out) respectable. Changed the world.

Bob Dylan: The most scandalous sellout in rock history. July 25, 1965: wears motorcycle jacket and fancy boots at the Newport Folk Festival and plays electric guitar. It's so loud the acoustic-purist audience can't hear him sing. They boo him off the stage.

Lionel Richie: Jumps ship from funk-rock Commodores to solo success and Ricardo Montalban calypso in 1981 with "All Night Long." Rapper Def Jef later put a picture of the "12 apostles of funk" on an album cover—guys like James Brown and George Clinton. Lionel was Judas.

Soul Asylum, Urge Overkill, and Green Day: All three of these bands have graduated from indie-rock insularity to pop stardom in the last year, and all of them have old fans who think they sound "too rock" now and wish they weren't on MTV. But the knee-jerk backlash is far dumber and more predictable than anything the bands themselves have done. I thought college radio was pretty much a dead issue musicwise by 1986 or so, but nowadays I often listen to commercial modern-rock stations in my car. Suddenly I'm an "alternative rock" fan again—now that the music's sold out.

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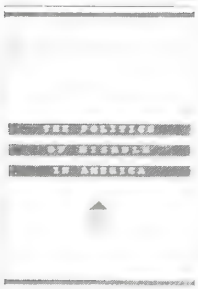


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"1965—Year of the Snake" and "1962—Year of the Tiger," from "Manimals," a series of portra
Daniel Lee, a Chinese-born photographer in New York City. Each of Lee's subjects was born in a di
year of the Chinese zodiac; using photo-manipulation software, he gave each subject the characteristics
animal corresponding to his or her year. Lee's portraits appeared in the May/June issue of American P

CANCER FAMILIES

By Philip St. Clair. From the Summer issue of
College, in Pennsylvania. St. Clair teaches English

A Years of doing all the wrong things.

It's almost as if they enjoy it, that word that
hacks and hisses,
And they use it fearlessly as they wait for the
genealogists of doom,
Lifting shrouds, plotting out each tier of family
history,
Serving the future in the dials on perpetual
calendars.

They take righteous pride in foreknowledge:
the world's
where choice
Is frivolous and futile, where every television
commercial
Is a parti-colored path to the grave, where
bones.

The men are obsessed with large-frame
handguns, pausing
At display cases in discount houses, buying
glossy magazines
With the latest blue-steel semiauto on the
cover,
Scouring ordnance maps of national parks,
marking optimum places
To go, when the pain gets too great, to
do it.

The women keep bright, brittle pills in light-
safe bottles.
They study the *Physician's Desk Reference*,
mark colorplates
With scarlet pens, shop for the lingerie they
will wear
When they retire to their boudoirs for the last
time
And arrange themselves like an armful of
long-stemmed roses.

But these things seldom happen: they want
company on their journey
To the last-act glare of family concern and
helpless disbelief,
And when they see themselves in the mirror of
the hospital room,
Watch their skulls about to bud through the
membrane of their faces,
They smile, say *I told you so*, and lie back
down.

[Essay]

IN THE TEMPLE OF PAIN

From A Stroke of Genius: Illness and Self Discovery, *by Paul West, to be published next month by Viking. In 1984, West, a novelist and memoirist, suffered a mild stroke that left his face and left arm paralyzed. As he describes the stroke in the book, "A clot, whipped up inside my heart during fibrillation (when the heart beats chaotically), had blocked part of the blood supply to my brain . . . my blood pressure was off the map . . . until the ambulance came (two, actually), I sat still, wondering if I was going to see the end of this lamentable day." West's account of his stroke, "My Body, Myself," appeared in the August 1989 issue of* Harper's Magazine. *This excerpt begins with his attempts, while in intensive care, to recover.*

My face came back to normal, more or less, but my left arm was useless in spite of massage, hot compresses, and right-handed efforts by its owner (or brief tenant) to make it be itself again. At once there was much talk about electrical cardioversion and how important it was to get me back into standard rhythm. What if cardioversion worked, I asked, but I then went back into fibrillation, or fib, as I had learned to say? They didn't like me to call it fib; I was being too familiar with their arcana. Well, this particular arcanum, I said, could surely provoke a stroke in somebody who had a blood clot cruising about within him.

A neurologist came and tested me for sound, asking what certain noises sounded like. My facetious, inventive answers pleased him little, I could tell, even though had I been the doctor I would have been glad to notice that the patient was capable of high spirits, was willing to fight back with what he had. It was his professional solemnity that I upset, and it did not occur to him that if there was any solemnity to what was going on it was mine. To him, I was just an item in the long chain of cases, rather like an author to a literature student reading a survey volume.

I, who had had little enough to do with doctors, now began to discover their nature. Some were fine, some were not; what both groups had in common was an almost total ignorance of the fact that a sick patient was not someone to spar and argue with. It was weird to be told, on the one hand, what was wrong with me and, on the other, to be spoken to as if I had all my resources going full blast to defend myself with. One anorexic cardiologist glared at me and said, "I do not like to deal with obese patients." What I [illegible] resented was the way son[illegible] graduated sawbones talked [illegible] ty to describe my symptom[illegible] symptoms was not simple [illegible] understand, was not couched in word[illegible] within their spectrum of anticipation.

Doctors should realize that patients—those who suffer—come from a different dimension, where in vainglorious optimism they hope to prosper without medical aid. When they come in for scrutiny and treatment, they are under stress; their blood pressure is already up and their hearts are beating hard. What they want

[Breakthrough]

RX FOR XL'S: LOOSEN UP

From a letter to the editor by Octavio Bessa Jr., a doctor in Stamford, Connecticut, that appeared last year in Archives of Internal Medicine, *a weekly journal published by the American Medical Association.*

Every year I treat an average of twenty-five patients who present themselves with a similar group of complaints: vague abdominal discomfort, distension (at times referring to the chest), heartburn, and frequent eructations [belches]. These symptoms frequently occur two or three hours after meals. The patients are typically middle-aged men who have always appeared healthy except for these on-and-off digestive complaints. Usually they have undergone gastroscopy, tomographic scans, and other tests without conclusive results.

I have been able to diagnose these patients easily by comparing the size of their trousers with their abdominal girth. There is usually a discrepancy of three inches or more. A good example is a sixty-seven-year-old airline pilot who had complained for two years of vague abdominal symptoms and a sensation of skipped heartbeats. His circumference difference was 3.5 inches. I recommended pants of a larger size, worn with suspenders, and his symptoms disappeared.

I have concluded that the "tight pants syndrome" is a self-induced problem that interferes with the motion of the diaphragm. Awareness of this medical curiosity could help to avoid both suffering and needless medical expenses.

octors, we drum into our skulls, are
word puzzle of the universe, and that
e Soap's pain. We have learned from
ert, however, that one of the least ad-
cause we hate pain. So when your M.D.
s you languish and writhe, it is because he or
the pain you feel, therefore hates
you, and won't put you out of your misery. Only murderers, Genet said, should judge murderers. By the same token, only those in agony should dispense painkillers.

Are our doctors in agony on our behalf? Of course not; they suffer vicariously, subject, I think, to that most dangerous of delusions: they know better than we how we feel because, after all, they are experts and have seen much more of this than we have. I have heard this from so many patients that I weary of it: when you enter a hospital, you are disrupting an arcane, elitist system of research, whose aim, no doubt, is to deal with diseases without the personalities to which they have become attached. A specific view, but one you come to after battling with the egos and procrustean as-
sumptions of the average hospital.

The trouble with medicine is that it sees itself as a religion. Nonmedical people believe in it, too. Now, nothing thrives on pain better than religion, which often teaches us that what matters least of all is the average human life—its comfort and happiness. Medicine, like religion, is a court of miracles, but disease, unlike faith, is not a man-made thing. So you have a court of miracles whose stock-in-trade comes entirely from the ingenuity of matter, which is the same wherever we go. A double whammy, this, since you have hauteur coupled with indisputable data, high caste with dreadful givens. Is this why the medical profession is so uppity, because its
and these diseases—Vincent's infection, vibrio comma, telangiectasia—sound as if they were first thought of in ancient Rome, ancient Athens? There is a cabalistic, exclusive side to medicine that we, the suffering public, should heed; it afflicts drug manufacturers, too, who convert illness into money much as the medical profession converts it into magic. It is a *profession*, and a profession has to do with power, permanence, and secrecy. Whenever you deal with your doctor, you are dealing with someone who deals in death and may be conversant with yours: a special relationship, to be sure, like that with your military commander or your clergyman. So we have to reckon with a special-
l self-importance at the same time as a habit-
d attitude toward what used to be called

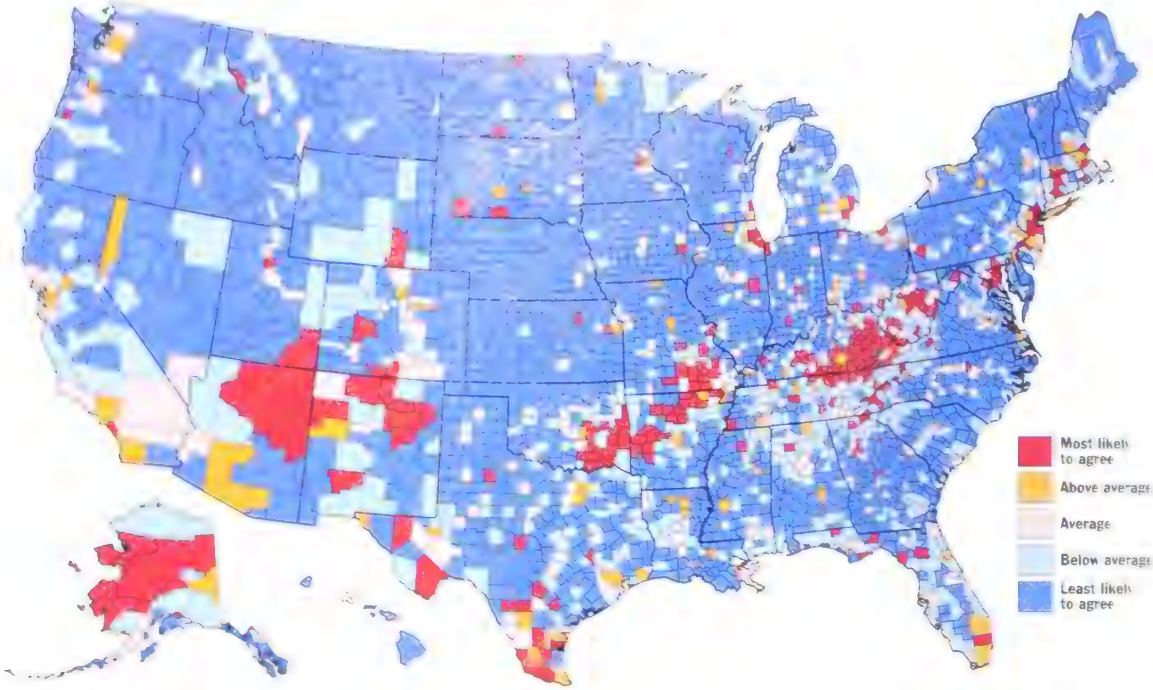
to persuade the doctor in charge that it was better not to aggravate my chronic symptoms; would have it I hadn't broached the matter.

Why do doctors think pain is good for people? Is it a hangover from Puritan days, if they are indeed over? Or do doctors, in a position of power, regard the rest of the race as a bunch of whiners? We are all familiar with the profes-
and "some pressure," after which pain electri-
expert said only "push" and "pressure." Elements of a secret society here mingle with an
engendered hebetude; and familiarity, overfa-




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PLACES CALLED HOPE, PLACES CALLED HOPELESS



American Dream Map—from the February issue of American Demographics. *The map shows the degree of "optimism or pessimism" that Americans in different regions feel about their economic future. The colors on the map indicate how local residents reacted to the statement "My standard of living will improve more than I have reason to expect." Areas in reddish brown, where residents are most optimistic, include Utah, Appalachia, areas around most Indian reservations and many college towns. Areas in blue—the most opti-*

AT THE INTERSECTION OF PROMISE AND MYTH

Dissent. Levy teaches American literature at Butler University, in Indianapolis. He is the author of The Culture and Commerce of

( )

African-American section of Indi-

Robert F. Kenne

CAPITAL IDEAS

searched through news reports and books to find

cities for various products, animals, or activities.

Bellevue, Washington: BMW Capital

World

Mulberry, Florida: Phosphate Capital

Santa Monica, California: Capital of Hip

Capital of the World

country without reckoning with any one of the cities to which people are actually moving: cities like Orlando, Raleigh, Sacramento, Jacksonville. Conversations about information overload and the hyperreal become curiously difficult to sustain after more than a week in a city like Indianapolis, which is not really a small place, only a flat, inconspicuous one.

Here, then, is one vision of America's future. The top three employers in Indianapolis are, in order, the city government, the state government, and the federal government. The fourth-largest employer is a drug company. The best restaurants are in strip malls. There are five Gap stores and one J. Crew. There are whole neighborhoods of moderately sized, affordable homes, some aging slightly, some brand-new developments wrapped around underfilled artificial lakes. In these neighborhoods, blacks and whites live side by side.

City officials are considering a new slogan for Indianapolis: "A Model for the Twenty-First-Century City." There is logic in this. While not shedding its reputation as "The Big Nap," a nondescript, backward, corn-fed Heartland capital, Indianapolis now also appears to have been a precursor to what Joel Garreau has called "edge cities," the suburban housing developments, office parks, and shopping malls that ring increasingly barren inner cities. If the business of Washington, D.C., moves to Alexandria and the middle class of Philadelphia moves to King of Prussia, then the people of Indianapolis might say, with justification, we've been living like this all along. We have a proper downtown to show to visitors, but only 12,000 people live there. We have bad neighborhoods, but they are not as bad as yours. And everyone has convenient shopping.

In many ways, Robert Kennedy's remarks on the night of Martin Luther King's assassination did not make a great speech. "What do you think I should say?" he asked Fred Dutton, his aide, minutes prior to its delivery. Kennedy begins by announcing to his listeners the news that King has been murdered; many in the crowd of a thousand do not hear him properly, however, which leaves him with the disconcerting task of addressing a crowd half of which is stunned into silence and half of which is innocently cheering his reverent descriptions of King. Since the details of the murder are still hazy, Kennedy is forced to build his rhetoric around conditional clauses—"considering the evidence there evidently . . . were white people who were responsible"—that disrupt his cadence. He seems struck by the word "difficult" and repeats it, mantra-like, amid pleas for understanding and compassion: "We can do well in this country. We will have difficult times. We've had difficult times in the past. We will have difficult times in the future." He repeats phrases, searching for the right combination of words. He reminds his audience that King was murdered, until he is sure everyone has gotten the message.

It is, in many ways, not a political speech at all; it is a response to trauma, a sudden synapse failure in the body politic. An open space. One wonders what Kennedy must have thought as he said that sentence, "I had a member of my family killed, but he was killed by a white man." One wonders what his audience thought of that confessional moment submerged in tortured

THE NYPD'S HIT PARADE

	17
	0
	0
	0
At girlfriend	1
	0
Threatening suicide	0
At wife	1
At beer can	1


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BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS

From "Are You a Doll Addict?" by Virginia

sessive, controlling addiction . . . If your answer to

any, a doll addict." Davis has been a doll appraiser

1. Are my doll purchases exceeding more

2. Am I buying dolls that I know are overpriced because I am afraid I may not find them

3. Am I getting overdue bills in the mail for

4. Have I become angry with, or have I lost, a friend because she refused to sell me a doll from her collection or because she purchased a doll I wanted to buy when she found it first or had more money than I did?

5. Do I have an extremely high telephone bill each month due to inquiries about dolls?

6. Is my house so filled with dolls that it looks like a museum and guests have to move dolls in order to sit down?

7. Do I have hundreds of dolls in boxes that can't be displayed because there's no space?

8. Am I selling dolls for less than I paid for them in order to buy more dolls?

9. Are the dolls becoming a source of argu-

10. Do I feel guilty after purchasing a doll?

11. Am I hiding doll receipts or dolls themselves?

12. When an ad says, "How can you refuse this precious doll?" do I feel as if I am turning away a starving child if I refuse?

13. At a doll show, do I have to make several trips to the car?

14. If I have to make a choice between my annual eye exam and a new doll I want, do I decide to wear my current eyeglasses for another year?

15. Are all of my friends doll collectors or dealers?

16. Do I spend time crying or lying awake at night, angry with myself over the doll purchases I have made?

17. Do I ask myself constantly why I have purchased so many dolls?

syntax, John Fitzgerald Kennedy's assassination suddenly becoming a footnote in history, not a primal scene. Was it enough? In retrospect, it seems like a verbal turn tested, then abandoned: my sorrow, he seems to be saying, may feel like yours, but maybe not. The language, he seems to say, isn't ready yet.

As a referendum on the progress of race in America since the 1960s, Indianapolis offers drastically divergent evidence. There are the calm, interracial neighborhoods, whose existence can be taken as evidence of Great Society reforms, but whose muted and suburban character also reflects a distinctly Republican social consensus that must be considered Ronald Reagan's (or, more likely, Indiana's own) success story as much as Lyndon Johnson's. But within walking distance of these neighborhoods are the neighborhoods where white families drive out black families (and vice versa) and the neighborhoods that seem more despondent than ever (the poverty rate in Indiana rose from 9 percent to 15.7 percent between 1980 and 1992).

Ultimately, Indianapolis is a story about how slowly change comes, not how it sometimes comes too strong. Observing the persistence of organizations like the Ku Klux Klan and the Black Panthers (who clashed twice on the statehouse steps last winter), one finds graphic evidence that even government intervention on the scale projected by 1960s liberalism has been inadequate to the heavy task of eliminating poverty and racism in a nation as enormous and inchoate as ours. Indianapolis served itself well in the 1970s by absorbing its adjacent suburbs and improving its tax base, but now its *new* suburbs are flooding with wealthy émigrés from the city, concerned about their taxes and their safety, or perhaps caught in the ideological centrifuge that draws Americans further away from one another in permanent pursuit of a larger yard and a neighborless horizon.

For these reasons, it is appealing to believe that Robert Kennedy's brief presence here somehow made coherence out of these mixed feelings and divergent evidence, that his victory in the Indiana primary constituted a rare and exemplary moment of consensus across the political spectrum. As exhilarating as some aspects of his campaign may have been, however, what appears to have actually occurred was a dubious electoral victory that tempers any mythologization of that month in Indiana. Kennedy's Indiana campaign was, in fact, a haphazard affair. He [illegible] conservative white audiences what they wanted to hear and then adjusted his speeches for minority audiences. If Kennedy adopted the Indiana primary as a test of his own synchronicity with the American spirit, he

BOOKSHELF



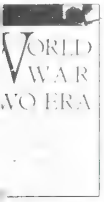


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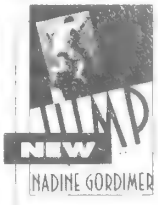
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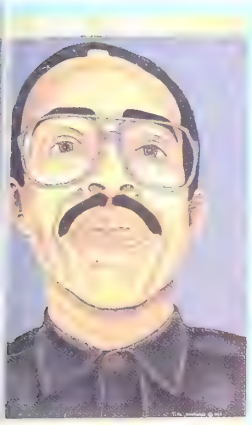
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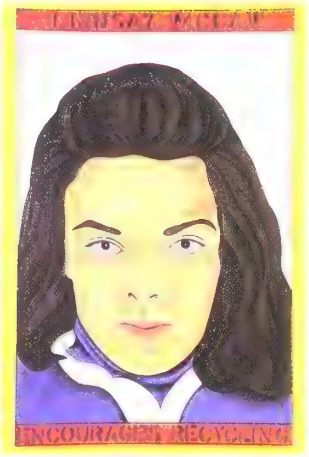
ten experience there: Mount Rushmore challenges its visitors to contrast the grandeur of our most regal presidents carved into the side of a mountain in the middle of the most holy land of the devastated Sioux. If the corner of Seventeenth and Broadway was a premeditated monument, we might say that its designers chose its array of empty spaces, its solitary yet central location, and its lack of a formal marker as a symbolic commemoration of the people and events we can't see, placed in the middle of a city we don't see—a memorial to turning away, an unmemorial.

Still, immediately surrounding that vacancy is a series of public structures that seem to be a tribute to Kennedy's vision of an activist government providing support to inner-city communities. Stand at the spot where Kennedy stood and turn in every direction. You will see clean, formidable buildings devoted to health care and education, a senior citizens' home, and a well-nurtured park named for the man Kennedy memorialized, a man whose mission was ultimately more essential to the lives of the people who reside in the neighborhood. It is hard to imagine that Kennedy would not be pleased.

At least briefly. Perhaps it is churlish to add that if you lift your eyes further you find that surrounding that circle of public buildings lies a census tract where the promise that activist government extends to blasted neighborhoods has taken, at best, a tentative foothold and where those impressive public buildings are as anomalous as they seem necessary. One goes to the corner of Seventeenth and Broadway for communion with an uncommemorated moment in American history and finds instead a communion with the unanswered questions of the civil-rights movement and the welfare state in America. Stand at the spot where Kennedy stood and ask: Did activist government try and fail? Was it attempted without [illegible] the necessary spirit, or the necessary patience? Or was activist government a success but still inadequate against the entropic forces that have afflicted neighborhoods across the country in the last twenty years, inadequate against the endemic mistrust that stands between separate races and separate classes? Stand at the spot where Kennedy stood, in the middle of a city that prides itself on being a model for the twenty-first century, and it will feel like no time at all has passed since Kennedy stood there and tried to find the words that would make the sorrow of one race comprehensible to another. History revolves around you. The language is still not ready. The twenty-first century, one thinks, is going to feel like starting over.

OCAL HEROES

























r. "Portraits of Dubuque," by Tilly Woodward, on display last October at the Des Moines Convention Center. In response to a series of racial dents, including cross burnings, that occurred in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1991, Woodward undertook a project that gave Dubuque residents the op- unity to nominate one another for "acts of kindness and goodness." More than 3,000 nomination forms were distributed throughout Dubuque. Woodward received 338 nominations. She then interviewed and photographed the nominees, and produced more than ninety pastel portraits, ch have been displayed in churches, on billboards, and in schools around Dubuque. In an essay that accompanies the portraits, Woodward es that she "wanted the project to recognize the daily acts of neighborliness on which communities are built, but that often go unacknowledged . . . It my goal that Portraits of Dubuque would help people recognize one another as individuals, and better enable people to recognize human goodness odward lives in Pella, Iowa.


ABSOLUT CITRON.

LIFE AS WE KNOW IT

A father, a son, and genetic destiny

By Michael Bérubé

In my line of work I don't think very often about carbon or potassium, much less about polypeptides or transfer RNA. I teach American and African-American literature; Janet Lyon, my legal spouse and general partner, teaches modern British literature and women's studies. Nothing about our jobs requires us to be aware of the biochemical processes that made us—and, more recently, our children—into conscious beings. But in 1985–86, when Janet was pregnant with our first child, Nicholas, I would lie awake for hours, wondering how the baseball-size clump of cells in her uterus was really going to form something living, let alone something capable of thought. I knew that the physical processes that form dogs and drosophilas are more or less as intricate, on the molecular level, as those that form humans; but puppies and fruit flies don't go around asking how they got here or how (another version of the same question) DNA base-pair sequences code for various amino acids. And though humans have been amazed and puzzled by human gestation for quite a while now, it wasn't until a few nanoseconds ago (in geological time) that their wonder began to focus on the chemical minutiae that somehow differentiate living matter from "mere" matter. The fact that self-replicating molecules had eventually come up with a life-form that could actually pick apart the workings of self-replicating molecules . . . well, let's just say I found this line of thought something of a distraction. At the time, I thought that I would never again devote so much attention to such ideas. I figured the miracle of human birth, like that of humans landing on the moon, would be more routine than miracle the second time around. It wasn't.

Five years later, in September 1991, Janet was pregnant again, another fall semester was beginning, and I was up late writing. At 2:00 A.M., Janet asked when I was coming to bed. At 4:00 A.M., she asked again. "Soon," I

Michael Bérubé is the author of Marginal Forces/Cultural Centers (Cornell University Press) *and* Public Access: Literary Theory and American Cultural Politics (Verso). *He is an associate professor of English at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.*

...R AT CORD. HE LOOKS
...ST AROUND THE EYES. I
HEARD DOWNSY?

...gn baby is nothing now," she replied, "bec...
...At which point she presented me with
...each, we'd day present, a watch with a second hand.

That was the first unexpected thing: James wasn't due for another
weeks. Then came more unexpected things in rapid succession.

Eight hours later, in the middle of labor, Janet spotted a dangerous
rhythm on her heart monitor. The only other person in the room
an obstetrics staff nurse; Janet turned to her and barked, "That's V-ta
We need a cardiologist in here. Get a bolus of lidocaine ready, and
the crash cart." (Being an ex-cardiac-intensive-care nurse comes
handy sometimes.) Pounding on her chest and forcing herself to cou
she broke out of what was possibly a lethal heart rhythm. Labor stal
Janet and I stared at each other for an hour. Suddenly, at a strange
ment when she and I were the only people in the room, James's head
sented. I hollered down the hall for help. James appeared within minu
an unmoving baby of a deep, rich, purple hue, tangled in his umbil
cord. "He looks Downsy around the eyes," I heard. Downsy? He lo
stillborn, I thought. They unwrapped the cord, cut it, gave him oxyg
Quickly, incredibly, he revived. No cry, but who cared? They gave
an Apgar score of 7, on a scale of 1 to 10. I remember feeling an imme
relief. My wife was alive, my second child was alive. At the end
teeth-grating hour during which I'd wondered if either of them would
the end of the day, Down syndrome somehow seemed like a reprieve.

Over the next half hour, as the nurses worked on James, and Janet
I tried to collect our thoughts, I realized I didn't know very much ab
Down's, other than that it meant James had an ex
chromosome and would be mentally retarded. I knew
have some homework to do.

But what kind of homework were we talking about? Would
ever have normal lives again? We'd struggled for eight years on sala
that left us able to peer at the poverty line only if one of us stood on
other's shoulders. A mere three weeks earlier, the university had h
Janet, thus making us one of the extremely rare dual-career acade
couples working in the same department; we knew how lucky we w
and we thought we were finally going to be "comfortable." But now w
we going to spend the rest of our days caring for a severely disabled ch
Would we have even an hour to ourselves? Christ, we'd only just finis
paying off the bills for *Nick's* birth two months earlier, and now were
facing the kind of catastrophic medical debt that fills the op-ed pa
These were selfish thoughts, and the understanding that such thoug
are "natural" didn't make them any less bitter or insistent.

We went over the past few months. The pregnancy had been occas
ally odd but not exactly scary. We'd decided against getting an am
centesis, on the grounds that a sonogram would pick up nearly any ser
problems with the fetus *except* Down syndrome, and the chances of h
ing a child with Down syndrome at Janet's age, thirty-six, were roug
... the chances of an amniocentesis-induced miscarriage (1 in
and 1 in 200, respectively). Later, there were some hitches: reduced f
movements, disproportionate fetal measurements
sonograms, low weight gain, and so on. Our worries w
vague but persistent.

Back in the present, over on his table in the birthing ro
James wasn't doing very well. He still wasn't moving, he had no su
ing reflex, and he was getting bluer. It turned out that the fetal op
ing in his heart hadn't closed fully. You and I had the same arra
ment until around the time of birth, when our heart's ventri
sealed themselves off in order to get us ready to start conducting
gen from our lungs into our bloodstream. But James still had a h

re no hole should be, and wasn't oxygenating properly.

There was more. Along with his patent ductus arteriosus and his tri-
y 21, there was laryngomalacia (floppy larynx), jaundice, poly-
emia (an abnormal increase in red blood cells), torticollis, vertebral
naly, scoliosis, hypotomia (low muscle tone), and (not least of these)
ing problems. That's a lot of text to wade through to get to your kid.
asically, James was in danger. If he made it through the night he
ld still be a candidate, in the morning, for open-heart surgery *and* a
heostomy. Because of the laryngomalacia, which isn't related to
vn's, he couldn't coordinate sucking, swallowing, and breathing, and
ir supply would close off if he slept on the wrong side. The vertebral
lems, we learned, occur in roughly one of six kids with Down's; his
three vertebrae were malformed, his spinal cord vulnerable. And his
k muscles were abnormally tight (that's the torticollis), leaving him
a 20-degree head tilt to the left. He was being fed intravenously and
tubes not only in his arm but in his stomach as well, run neatly
ugh his umbilical artery, still viable from the delivery. Our first Po-
id of him shows a little fleshy thing under a clear plastic basin, lost in
chinery and wires. I remember thinking, it's all right that they do all
to him now because he'll never remember it. But it can't be a pleas-
introduction to the world.

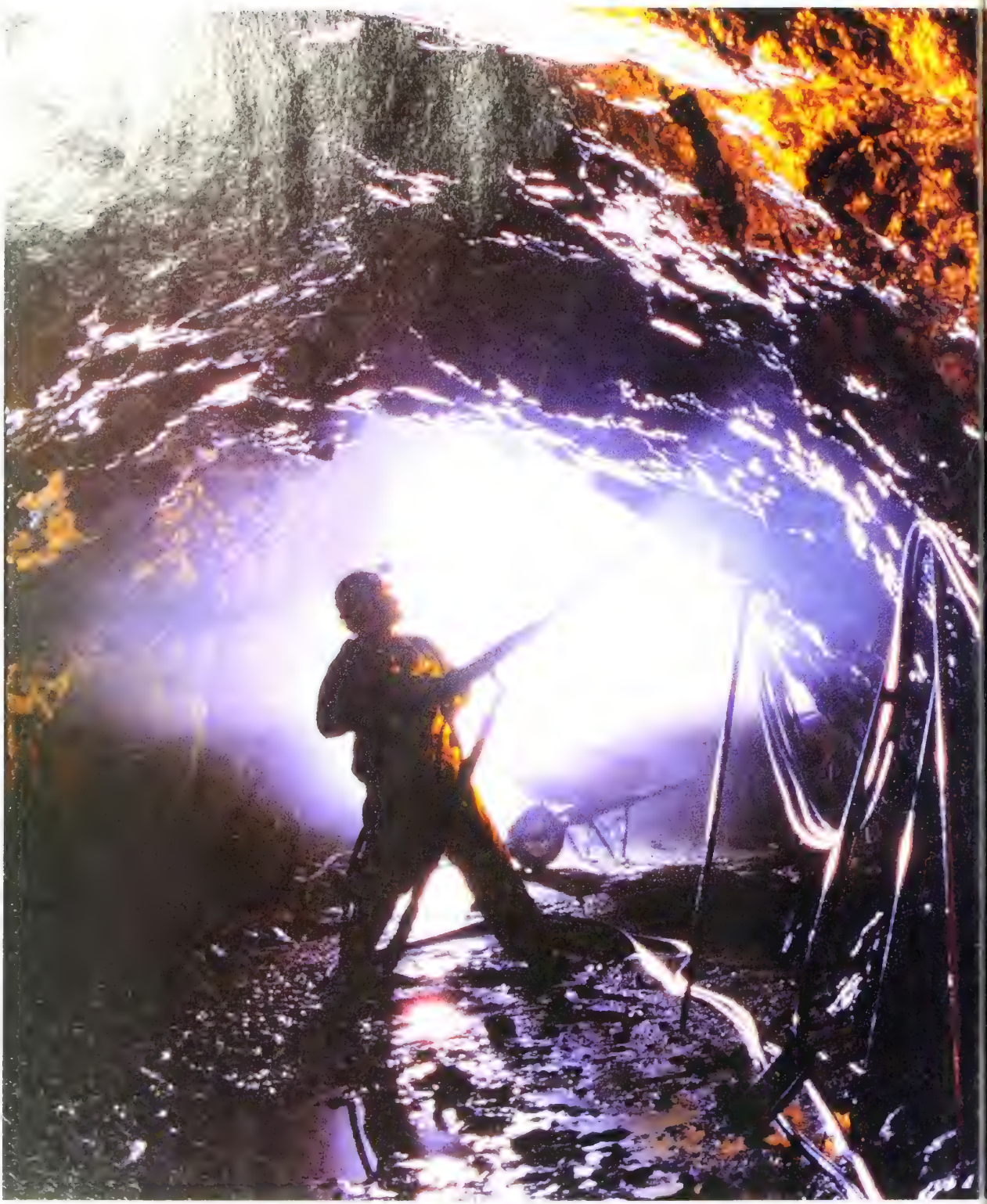
Within days things got better, and one anxiety after another peeled
y: Jamie's duct closed, and as I entered the intensive-care unit one
rning I found that the staff had erased from his chart the phone
nber of the emergency helicopter service that would have
vn him to Peoria for heart surgery. His blood-oxygen levels
ched the high 90s and stayed there, even as he was weaned
m 100 percent oxygen to a level just above the atmospheric
m. A tracheoscopy (that is, a viewing of his throat with an eye-
ce at the end of a tube) confirmed that he didn't need a tra-
eostomy. He still wasn't feeding, but he was opening an eye now
then and looking out at his brother and his parents.

got hold of everything I could on genetics, reproduction, and "ab-
rmal" human development, dusting off college textbooks I hadn't
ched since before Nick was born. At one point a staff nurse was sent
to check on *our* mental health; she found us babbling about meiosis and
noploids, wondering anew that Jamie had "gotten" Down syndrome the
ond he became a zygote. When the nurse inadvertently left behind
her notes, Janet sneaked a peek. "Parents seem to be in-
tellectualizing," we read. "Well," Janet shrugged, "that
seems accurate enough."

Looking over the fossil record, I really don't see any compelling
ic behind humans' existence on the planet. I'm told that intelligence
s obvious survival value, since organisms with a talent for information
cessing "naturally" beat out their competitors for food, water, and con-
s, but human history doesn't convince me that *our* brand of intelli-
nce is just what the world was waiting for. Thus I've never believed we
re supposed to survive the Ice Age, or that some cosmic design man-
ed the cataclysmic collision in the late Cretaceous period that gave us
iridium layer in our soil and may have ended the dinosaurs' reign. Bac-
ia and horseshoe crabs unmodified for aeons are still with us, but what
s become of *Eusthenopteron*, introduced to me by then-five-year-old
cholas as the fish that could walk on land? If you were fighting for sur-
al 350 million years ago, you'd think you'd have had a leg up on the
mpetition if you developed small bones in your fins, enabling you to
mmy onto shore. But you'd be wrong: these days, *Eusthenopteron* is
thing more than a card in Nick's "prehistoric animals" collection,
ngside the Ankylosaur, the mastodon, and the jessehelms. I figured we
re here thanks to dumb luck, and though we have managed to under-

WE SAT AT
NURSE'S NOTES
INTELLECTUALIZING
SEEMED ACCURATE



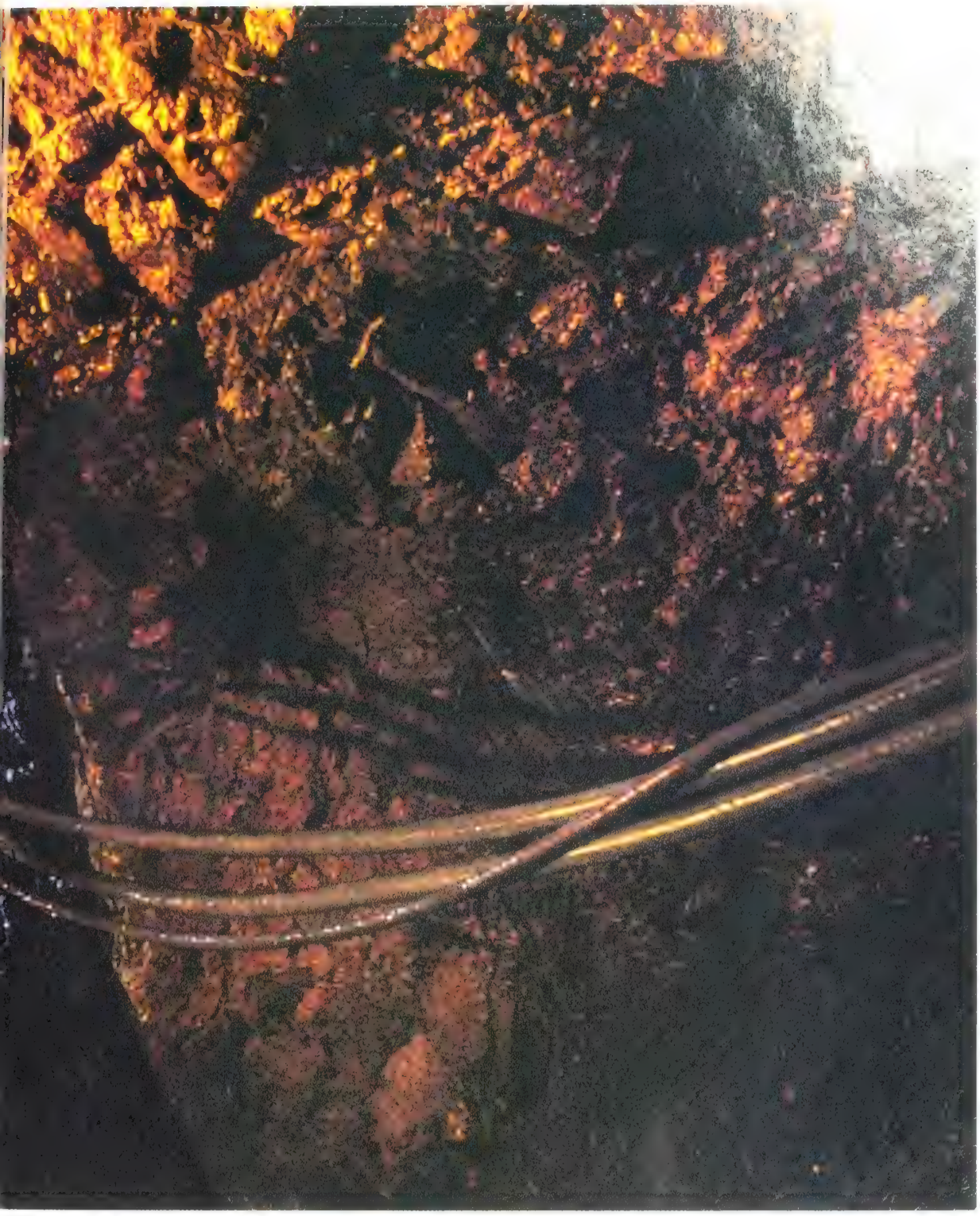


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stand our own biochemical origins and take neat close-up pictures
the far side of Saturn, we also spend much of our time exterminating
selves and most other species we meet. And nothing in Nick's cards
we too won't wind up in nature's deck of "prehistoric" animals.

Still, it wasn't until I got to college and started thinking about sex
drugs in rather immediate ways that I began to realize that the work
of chance on the molecular level are even more terrifying than on
evolutionary plane. Of course, the molecular and the evolutionary
everything to do with each other; it's just that the minutiae of mitosi
more awe-inspiring to me, *because* more quotidian, than the though
random rocks slamming into my home planet every couple of hun
million years. For those who don't feel like cracking open old textbo
Richard Powers's novel *The Gold Bug Variations* offers some idea of w
involved in cell division: "seven feet of aperiodic crystal unzips,
complements of each of its billion constituents, integrates them perf
without tearing or entangling, then winds up again into a fraction
millimeter, all in two minutes." And this is just the ordinary stuff
cells are doing every moment. Sex, as always, is a little more complica

So let's talk about sex. Of the 15 percent of pregnancies that en
miscarriage, more than half are the result of chromosomal abnormal
and half of these are caused by trisomy—three chromosomes where
should be. Of the myriad possible genetic mistransmissions in huma
production, excluding anomalies in the sex chromosomes, it appears
only three kinds of trisomies make it to term: people with three
teenth chromosomes (Patau's syndrome), three eighteenth chromos
(Edwards' syndrome), and three twenty-first chromosomes (Down
drome). About one in four or five zygotes with Down's winds up ge
born, and since Down's accounts for one of every 600 to 800 live bi
it would appear that trisomy 21 happens quite often, maybe on the
of once in every 150 to 250 fertilizations. Kids with Edwards' or Pa
syndrome are born severely deformed and profoundly retarded;
normally don't live more than a few months. That's what I would
pect of genetic anomaly, whatever the size of the autosome: th
the twenty-first chromosome is the smallest we have, James still
extra genetic material in every single cell. You'd think the effec
such a basic transcription error would make themselves felt p
clearly.

But what's odd about Down's is how extraordinarily subtle it
be. Mental retardation is one well-known effect, and it can s
times be severe, but anyone who's watched Chris Burke in
Life Goes On or "Mike" in McDonald's commercials knows
the extent of such retardation can be next to negligible. The *real* s
of Down's lies not in intelligence tests but in developmental delays a
the board, and for the first two years of James's life the most importa
these were physical rather than mental (though thanks to James I've c
to see how interdependent the mental and physical really are). His
cles are weaker than those of most children his age, his nasal passages
perceptibly narrower. His tongue is slightly thicker; one ear is crin

His fingers would be shorter and stubbier but for the
that his mother's are long, thin, and elegant. His face
few degrees flatter through the middle, his nose delicat

Down's doesn't cut all children to one mold; the relations betw
James's genotype and phenotype are lacy and intricate. It's sort of
what happens in Ray Bradbury's short story "A Sound of Thunder,"
which a time traveler accidentally steps on a butterfly while hunting
nosaurs 65 million years ago and returns home to find that he's char
the conventions of English spelling and the outcome of the previous
election. As he hit the age of two, James was very pleased to find hi
capable of walking; by three, he had learned to say the names of color

AT NO TIME IN
DID HOMINIDS NO
TO OFFSPRING
SYNDROME

at to ten, and to claim that he would *really* be turning four. Of all our
etic nondisjunctions (with the possible exception of hermaphro-
m), only Down syndrome produces so nuanced, so finely articulated a
ition on "normal" reproduction. James is less mobile and more suscep-
to colds than his peers, but—as his grandparents have often attest-
you could play with him for hours and never see anything "wrong."
nd then there's a variant form of Down's, called mosaicism, which re-
from the failure of the chromosome to divide not *before* fertilization
immediately *after*, during the early stages of cell division. Only one in a
dred people with Down's are mosaics, but it's possible for such folks to
e some normal cells and some with trisomy 21; there's something about
twenty-first, then, that produces anomalies during either meiosis *or* mi-
s. Now, that's truly weird. There's also translocation, in which the
nty-first chromosome splits off and joins the fourteenth or fifteenth,
lucing people who can be called "carriers"; they can give birth to more
slocation carriers, normal children, or translocation kids with Down's.
l although everyone knows that the incidence of Down's increases with
ernal age, almost no one knows that three quarters of all such children
are born to mothers under thirty-five, or that fathers are ge-
netically "responsible" for about one fifth of them.
Parents seem to be intellectualizing. And why not?

There has never been a better time than now to be born with
wn syndrome—and that's really saying something, since it has recently
n reported in chimpanzees and gorillas. Because our branch of the
lutionary tree split off from the apes' around 15 to 20 million years
, these reports would seem to suggest that we've produced offspring
h Down syndrome with great regularity at every point in our history as
ninids—even though it's a genetic anomaly that's not transmitted
editarily (except in extremely rare instances) and has no obvious sur-
al value. The statistical incidence of Down's in the current human
ulation is no less staggering: there may be 10 million people with
wn's worldwide, or just about one on every other street corner.
But although *Homo sapiens* (as well as our immediate ancestors) has al-
s experienced some difficulty dividing its chromosomes, it wasn't until
6 that British physician J. Langdon Down diagnosed it as "mongolism"
cause it produced children with almond-shaped eyes reminiscent, to at
st one nineteenth-century British mind, of central Asian faces). At the
e, the average life expectancy of children with Down's was under ten.
d for a hundred years thereafter—during which the discovery of antibi-
s lengthened the life span of Down's kids to around twenty—Down
drome was formally known as "mongoloid idiocy."
The 1980 edition of my college genetics textbook, *The Science of Genet-
An Introduction to Heredity*, opens its segment on Down's with the
ds, "An important and tragic instance of trisomy in humans involves
wn's syndrome, or mongoloid idiocy." It includes a picture of a "mon-
oid idiot" along with a karyotype of his chromosomes and the informa-
n that most people with Down's have IQs in the low 40s. The presenta-
n is objective, dispassionate, and strictly "factual," as it should be. But
ding it again in 1991, I began to wonder: is there a connection between
official textual representation of Down syndrome and the social poli-
s by which people with Down's are understood and misunderstood?
You bet your life there is. Anyone who has paid attention to the "polit-
l correctness" wars on American campuses knows how stupid the aca-
nic left can be: we're always talking about language instead of reality,
ining about "lookism" and "differently abled persons" instead of
nging the world the way the real he-man left *used* to do. But you
ow, there really is a difference between calling someone "a mongoloid
ot" and calling him or her "a person with Down syndrome." There's
n a difference between calling people "retarded" and calling them "de-

RIGHT THROUGH THE SEVENTIES, "MONGOLOID IDIOT" WASN'T AN EPITHET, IT WAS A DIAGNOSIS

layed." Though these words may appear to mean the same damn th when you look them up in Webster's, I remember full well from my as an Americ in male adolescent that I never taunted my peers by ca them "delayed." Even from those of us who were shocked at the freq [illegible] were thrown around in our Catholic high school, "retard" aroused no comment, no protest. In o words, a retarded person is just a retard. But *delayed* persons will get w they're going eventually, if you'll only have some patience.

One night I said something like this to one of the leaders of what I ally think of as the other side in the academic culture wars. Being a mane fellow, he replied that although epithets like "mongoloid idiot" undoubtedly used in a more benighted time, there have always been sons of goodwill who resisted such phraseology. A nice thought, but it ain't so. Right through the 1970s, "mongoloid idiot" wasn't an epithe was a *diagnosis*. It wasn't uttered by callow, ignorant persons fearful of ference" and central Asian eyes; it was pronounced by the best-tra medical practitioners in the world, who told families of kids with Do that their children would never be able to dress themselves, recog their parents, or live "meaningful" lives. Best to have the child institut alized and tell one's friends that the baby died at birth. Only the r stubborn, intransigent, or inspired parents resisted such advice from t trusted experts. Who could reasonably expect otherwise?

It's impossible to say how deeply we're indebted to those parents, c dren, teachers, and medical personnel who insisted on treating pe with Down's as if they *could* learn, as if they *could* lead "meaning lives. In bygone eras, parents who didn't take their children home di really have the "option" of doing so; you can't talk about "options" any substantial sense of the word) in an ideological current so str But in the early 1970s, some parents did bring their children ho worked with them, held them, provided them physical therapy and " cial learning" environments. These parents are saints and sages. T have, in the broadest sense of the phrase, uplifted the race. In the million-year history of Down syndrome, they've allowed us to beli that we're finally getting somewhere.

Of course, the phrase "mongoloid idiocy" did not cause Down s drome any more than the word "homo" magically induces same-sex sire. But words and phrases are the devices by which we beings sig what homosexuality, or Down syndrome, or anything else, will m There surely were, and are, the most intimate possible relations betw the language in which we spoke of Down's and the social practices which we understood it—or refused to understand it. You don't hav be a poststructuralist or a postmodernist or a post-*anything* to get this you have to do is meet a parent of a child with Down syndrome. Not l ago, we lived next door to people whose youngest child had Down's. ter James was born, they told us of going to the library to find out m about their baby's prospects and wading through page after page of dated information, ignorant generalizations, and pictures of people mental institutions, face down in their feeding trays. These parents manded the library get some better material and throw out the garb they had on their shelves. Was this a "politically correct" thing for t to do? Damn straight it was. That garbage has had its effects *for gen tions*. It may only look like words, but perhaps the fragile little neon whose lives were thwarted and impeded by the policies and condition institutionalization can testify in some celestial court to the powe mere language, to the intimate links between words and social policies

Some of my friends tell me this sounds too much like "strict social c structionism"—that is, too much like the proposition that culture is ev thing and biology is only what we decide to make (of) it. But altho James is pretty solid proof that human biology "exists" independently our understanding of it, every morning when he gets up, smiling and b

to his family, I can see for myself how much of his life depends on
ocial practices. On one of those mornings I turned to my mother-in-
l and said, "He's always so full of mischief, he's always so glad to see
the only thought I can't face is the idea of this little guy waking up
i day in a state mental hospital." To which my mother-in-law replied,
ll, Michael, if he were waking up every day in a state mental hospital,
ouldn't *be* this little guy."

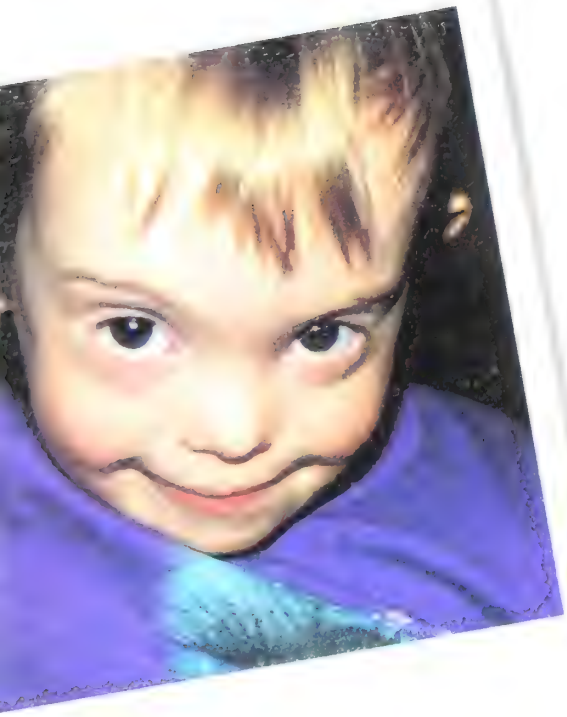
s it happens, my mother-in-law doesn't subscribe to any strict social
tructionist newsletters; she was just passing along what she took to be
common sense. But every so often I wonder how common that sense
y is. Every ten minutes we hear that the genetic basis of something has
"discovered," and we rush madly to the newsweeklies: Disease is ge-
! Homosexuality is genetic! Infidelity, addiction, obsession with mys-
novels—all genetic! Such discourses, it would seem, bring out the hid-
determinist in more of us than will admit it. Sure, there's a baseline
e in which our genes "determine" who we are: we can't play the tune
ss the score is written down somewhere in the genome. But one does
need or require a biochemical explanation for literary taste, or voguing,
faithless lovers. In these as in all things human, including Down's, the
nome is but a template for a vaster and more significant range of social
historical variation. Figuring out even the most rudimentary of rela-
s between the genome and the immune system (something of great rel-
hce to us wheezing asthmatics) involves so many trillions of variables
a decent answer will win you an all-expenses-paid trip to Stockholm.
m not saying we can eradicate Down's—or its myriad effects—simply
alking about it more nicely. I'm only saying that James's intelligence is
g better than it would in an institution, and people who try to deny
don't strike me as being among the geniuses of the species. And
y time I hear some self-styled "realist" tell me that my logic licenses
kind of maniacal social engineering that produced Auschwitz, I do a
ity check: the people who brought us Auschwitz weren't "social
structionists." They were eugenicists. They thought they knew the
mutable laws" of genetics and the "fixed purpose" of evolution,
they were less interested in "improving" folks like Jamie than in
erminating them. I'll take my chances with the people who be-
e in chance.

And yet there's something very seductive about the notion that
wn syndrome wouldn't have been so prevalent in humans for so
g without good reason. Indeed, there are days when, despite
rything I know and profess, I catch myself believing that peo-
with Down syndrome are here for a specific purpose—perhaps
each us patience, or humility, or compassion, or mere joy. A
at deal can go wrong with us in utero, but under the heading of what
s wrong, Down syndrome is among the most basic, the most funda-
ntal, the most common, *and* the most innocuous, leavening the species
h children who are somewhat slower, and usually somewhat
gentler, than the rest of the human brood. It speaks to us
strongly of design, if design may govern in a thing so
small.

After seventeen days in the ICU, James was scheduled for re-
e. We would be equipped with the materials necessary for his care, in-
ding oxygen tanks and an apnea monitor that would beep if his heart
ved, became extremely irregular, or stopped. To compensate for his in-
lity to take food orally, James would have a gastrostomy tube surgically
roduced through his abdominal wall into his stomach. Janet and I
ked. James had recently made progress in his bottle feeding; why do
mptive surgery? We nixed the gastrostomy tube, saying we'd prefer to
ment his bottle feedings with a nasal tube and we'd do it ourselves.
es stayed three more days in the ICU, and came home to a house full

THE
MYSELF
WITH
A SPECIFIC





dinners from our colleagues.

details of that autumn. But ev

late, rummaging through the medicine closet for Ace b

I came across the Hypafix adhesive tape w

attached James's feeding tube to the bridge of his nose, or

wrapped around his tiny chest for his apnea monitor. It's like

covering evidence of another life, dim but indelible, and you realize t

once upon a time you could cope with practically anything. Runnin

nail tube through your baby's nose to his stomach is the worst kind

counterintuitive practice. You have to do it carefully, measuring y

length of tubing accurately and listening with a stethoscope to make s

you haven't entered the lung. Whenever James pulled out his tubes,

to the whole thing over again, in the other nostril this time, lu

cating and marking and holding the tube while fumbling with the wor

stickiest tape. It's a four-handed job, and I don't blame the staff doct

for assuming we wouldn't undertake such an enterprise alone.

But slowly we got James to bottle feed. After all, for our purpos

Jamie's nasal tube, like unto a thermonuclear weapon, was there precis

so that we *wouldn't* use it. Each week a visiting nurse would set a mi

mum daily amount for Jamie's milk intake, and whatever he didn't get

bottle would have to go in by tube. So you can see the incentive at w

here. Within a month we began to see glimpses of what James would l

like sans tube. Then we stopped giving him oxygen during the night, a

gradually his tiny nostrils found themselves a lot less encumbered. He s

didn't have a voice, but he was clearly interested in his new home a

very trusting of his parents and brother.

In the midst of that winter James began physical therapy and m

sages. We stretched his neck every night, and whenever we could affo

it we took him to a local masseuse who played ambient music, relaxed

all, and worked on James for an hour. His physical therapist showed

how everything about James was connected to everything else: His ne

if left uncorrected, would reshape the bones of his face. The straigh

his neck, the sooner he'd sit up, the sooner he'd walk. If he could han

simple solid foods with equal facility in both sides of his mouth, he co

center himself more easily; and the sooner he could move around

himself, the more he'd be able to explore and learn. In other words,

eating would affect his ability to walk, and his thighs and torso wo

impinge upon his ability to talk. I suppose that's what it means to

Not only did we realize the profound interdependence of hum

hearts and minds; we also discovered (and had to reconfigure) our

lations to a vast array of social practices and institutions. "Develo

mental" turns out to be a buzzword for a sprawling nexus of agenci

state organizations, and human disabilities. Likewise, "special nee

isn't a euphemism; it's a very specific marker. We're learning abo

the differences between "mainstreaming" and "inclusion," and we

be figuring out the Americans with Disabilities Act for the rest of

lives. Above all else, we know that James is extremely lucky to be so w

provided for; when every employer is as flexible as ours, when paren

leave is the law of the land, when private insurers can't drop famil

from the rolls because of "high risk" children, when every child can

fed, clothed, and cared for—*then* we can start talking about what kind

a choice "life" might be.

Because, after all he's been through, James is thriving. He's thrilled

be here and takes a visible, palpable delight in seeing his reflection in t

oven d toddles across the kitchen, or hearing his parents addr

him in voices of the *Sesame Street* regulars, or winging a Nerf ball

his brot the couch. He knows perfectly well when he's doing som

thing we never seen before, like riding his toddler bicycle down t

hall into the laundry room or calling out "Georgia" and "Hawaii" as

p through Nick's book of the fifty states. He's been a bibliophile from
re moment he learned to turn pages. His current favorite is Maurice
r k's classic *Where the Wild Things Are*—surely a Great Book by any
ar ard; he began by identifying with Max and then, in one of those "os-
ll ons" described by reader-response criticism and feminist film theo-
, itched over to identifying with the wild things themselves—roaring
is rrible roar and showing his terrible claws.

J has his maternal aunts' large deep eyes, and a beautiful smile that
m now involves his whole body. He's not only an independent cuss,
at e also has an attention span of about twenty minutes—eighteen
ji tes longer than the average American political pundit. He's blessed
it a preternaturally patient, sensitive brother in Nick, who, upon hear-
s ne of his classmates' parents gasp "Oh my God" at the news that
m had Down's, turned to her and said with a fine mixture of reassur-
n and annoyance, "He's perfectly all *right*." Like Nick, James has a
ec sense of humor; the two of them can be set agiggle by pratfalls, radi-
al ncongruities, and mere sidelong looks. He's just now old enough to
e rious about what he was like as a baby: as he puts it, all he could do
a go "waaah" (holding his fists to his eyes). Barring all the contingen-
ie hat can never be barred, James can expect a life span of anywhere
o thirty-five to fifty-five years. For tomorrow, he can expect to see his friends at day care, to put all his shapes in his shapes box, and to sing along with Raffi as he shakes his sillies out and wiggles his waggles away.

Before James was born I frankly didn't think very highly of ap-
e: to our "common humanity." I thought such appeals were well inten-
.c d but basically inconsequential. Clearly, Muslim and Christian do
o ond over their common ancestor in *Australopithecus*. Rwandan Hutu
n Rwandan Tutsi do not toast to the distinctive size of their cerebral
o ces. The rape of Bosnia, and Bosnian women, does not stop once
ie ian soldiers realize that they too will pass from the earth.

nd yet we possess one crucial characteristic: the desire to communi-
a , to understand, to put ourselves in some mutual, reciprocal form of
o act with one another. This desire hasn't proven any better at disarm-
n warheads than any of the weaker commonalities enumerated above,
u it stands a better chance nonetheless. For among the most amazing
n hopeful things about us is that we show up, from our day of birth,
r grammed to receive and transmit even in the most difficult circum-
tz ces; the ability to imagine mutual communicative relations is embed-
le in our material bodies, woven through our double-stranded fibers.
inted, it's only one variable among trillions, and it's not even "funda-
n tally" human—for all we know, dolphins are much better at commu-
i tion than we are. And the sociohistorical variables of human com-
n nication will always be more significant and numerous than any
e tic determinism can admit. All the same, it's in our software some-
vl re, and, better still, it's a program that teaches itself how to operate
a time we use it.

Whether you want to consider reciprocal communication a constant or
r riable, though, the point remains that it's a human attribute requiring
pt r people if it's going to work. Among the talents we have, it's one we
cld stand to develop more fully. It's only natural: among our deepest,
t ngest impulses is the impulse to mutual cuing. Nothing will delight
a es so much as the realization that you have understood him—except
h realization that he has understood *you*, and recursively understood his
w understanding and yours. Perhaps I could have realized our human
t e in mutual realization without James's aid; any number of other hu-
n ns would have been willing to help me out. But now that I get it, I get
t r good. Communication is itself self-replicating. Sign unto others as
y 'd have them sign unto you. Pass it on. ■

N
JAME
REALIZATION
UNDERSTOOD HIM

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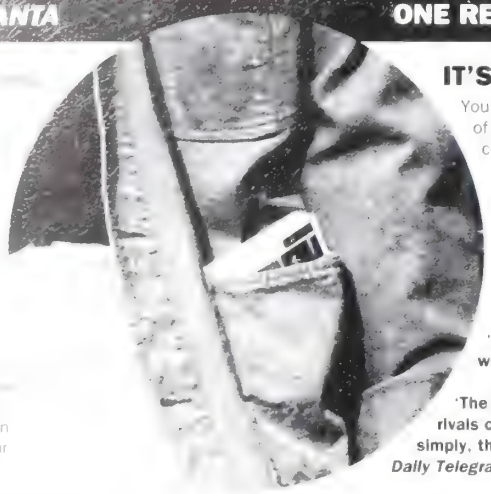
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OUR CURRENCY IN CYBERSPACE

Trading the American dollar against the American government

By Ted Fishman

The U.S. dollar headed south last spring, right into the heat. In two mad sprints downward in May and June, our money hit postwar lows against the Japanese yen and the German mark, on some days losing as much as 1 percent of its value. The projectable trend promised disaster. Analysts invoked devaluation and Latin American–style hyper-inflation. An economist freshly hired from the Federal Reserve to work at Goldman Sachs's currency desk told me in grave tones that we could end the summer as a poor country. I pictured Japanese housewives plying Fifth Avenue with Louis Vuitton wheelbarrows full of dollars. The newspapers, purveying both doom and reassurance, simultaneously hyped the dollar's drop and played down its effects: good for U.S. exporters, bad for U.S. tourists and VCR buyers.

The news of the dollar's turbulence did not disturb me until the governments of the United States, Germany, Japan, and fourteen other rich countries tried to rescue the dollar from its free fall, proving that central bankers and financial ministers were rattled. In May and again in June, the alliance tried to beat back the money-center banks, mutual funds, and other downside speculators with a $12 billion stake in the foreign currency markets, all bet on the dollar. The gamble was backed up with tough talk from Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen, but the dollar sank even further, and the currency markets seemed uncontrollable.

By late summer the dollar had settled at about 100 yen, down from January's price of 113. (As of this writing, it stands at 97.6.) In August, Peter Fisher, the officer of the New York Federal Reserve Bank who manages the system's currency trading, reflected on the intervention's failure: "There was heavy dollar selling that we met head-on," Fisher said, as if describing an ambush. "[The government's intervention] was anticipated." The Fed reported that it devoted $2.8 billion to fighting the selling wave, a pool of money that traders profited from as the dollar sank to new lows. The sum total of our government's effort to protect its own currency, then, was to transfer millions of public dollars into the coffers of some of the richest individual and institutional currency traders in the world.

I was once a professional trader. For seven years at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, I traded my own account. I was a small trader, though the amount of money I moved around seemed large enough to me—on my biggest day I controlled $360 million. I traded everything from stock to currencies to chickens. In January 1991, however, I lost most of my trading money on a play in cattle futures. My losses occurred in the December and January before the Gulf War, with the collapse of peace talks between the United States and Iraq. The market expected the "mother of all wars," and cattle prices went berserk. I liquidated just short of ruin. Had I held on, the firestorm of U.S. bombers would have restored my account. Afterward, I was unable to concentrate, trading in a daze. Six months later, I was gone.

Now, like a junkie come clean, I avoid the price tables in the newspaper and keep my money parked safely in mutual funds. Still, trading imbued me with a zero-sum outlook on life—that is, someone else's gain was my loss—and that outlook has been slow to fade. So when the currency news spread from the third

Ted Fishman is a writer living in Chicago.



section of the *Wall Street Journal* to the front

I began to fear

that the [illegible] trip would cost me. This specter peaked in June when the van der [illegible] Dutch family of our au pair, encamped in our apartment for two weeks. Their pleasure with the bargain prices in our stores, [illegible] our home, and wonder that computers in America "were almost free" left me feeling pauperized, ashamed that the [illegible] I had would buy so little in their small [illegible] tulip farmers. Just as when I was a floor trader, I felt their good fortune reflected [illegible] income. I didn't like the idea of the van der Meers, or Muellers or Matsumotos or that matter, getting rich at my expense, and [illegible] Who and what were behind [illegible] I was taken and whether my government could do [illegible]

Chicago, my hometown, makes the [illegible] than other [illegible] and the city is just as connected to the world markets. In 1994, for example, the dollar value of all trading on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange will exceed [illegible] the total [illegible] Exchange will exceed six times the aggregate of all the world's gross national products. Each day, $800 billion changes hands. You wouldn't need a big piece of that to make a living—a half a millionth of a percent ($1 million a year) would do nicely.

At the Merc, as the Chicago Mercantile Exchange is known, I found Clifford Besser, a trader in the German mark futures pit. He joined me in his trading jacket, the loose-fitting smock floor traders wear so that others on the floor can easily identify them. He had just realized a $[illegible] loss and was glad. "I feel good when I take a small loss," he told me. "It proves to me that I can do what's necessary to avoid a big loss."

Walking through the Merc, which is housed in two tall towers overlooking the confluence banks of the Chicago River, one feels like a pinball in a high-tech pinball machine. On the two football-field-sized trading floors one can see traders crowded into the stepped pits, shouting, running, gesturing madly. In this double-sized world, no one sits. Eight stories of narrow escalators move a constant rush of traders, brokers and clerks, all in colored jackets, who push their way up and down like confetti in an air current. Trucks hawking burritos, pizza, and chicken park illegally outside. Customers tear into their bags as they rush back to the trading floor.

Besser said he had a few minutes for lunch since the London markets had just closed and the rest were slow. We stopped at what passed for his office, a two-foot-high locker he rented from the exchange. It holds his work to

to record his trades on, pens and pencils, $5 pocket calculator. It's business pared e minimum—no customers, no employo inventory, no address. Just money. He l out a pager-sized computer terminal eports market prices. When he leaves the he carries it at all times, like a life-sup ystem. He checks it between bites of his ich. He also checks it when he wakes up middle of the night.

lunch, Besser quizzed me about the mar making sure I could follow his trading ut pestering him during the day with a lot sic questions. Interference from me could im money. For traders who can decipher gns, the floor is as orderly as a circus is to soned trapeze act. Traders learn to tune oise and focus only on the signs they That takes time. In fact, it took me a year ding just to follow the conversation in the bers' lounge. Here's what I learned: Fu markets build on a basic concept, com ng today to make a transaction in the fu For example, Jones runs a steel mill in aukee and knows that his new German ts must be paid for in two months. Jones the dollar will decline over that time and what in effect will be a nasty dollar price on his robots. His solution? Lock in an ex ge rate today with a futures contract. In futures market people come together to e an auction at which a market price gets Futures markets also provide liquidity, let people move in and out of the market out having to scrounge for individual buy nd sellers. Speculators who, unlike Jones, k they can make money on the currency also play the market, not because they fear rate changes but because they *desire* them.

followed Besser into the pit for a couple of ks in early June, the period between the times that the large central banks inter d. On June 7, he greeted me at 7:00 A.M., e the market opened, telling me that the before, he had traded 5 percent of the en volume in the mark futures pit, moving nd a few hundred million dollars' worth.

igital clocks on the trading floor ticked to l 7:20 A.M., when the bell would ring to n trading in German marks, Swiss francs, nese yen, British pounds, and Canadian ars. Besser moved hurriedly toward the man mark futures pit, a stepped crater the of a family swimming pool. Behind him brokers stood shoulder to shoulder with ne clerks, whose job was to report the s fed them by bank traders elsewhere, one Chicago, another in New York. Although acting for different bosses a thousand miles apart, the clerks shouted in chorus, as if phone line. Currency traders everywhere know the latest market prices within a second or two. Three seconds is a long lag time. (Eastern European central banks got trounced in the currency markets before the Cold War thaw in part because their phone systems delivered wire news several seconds after it hit London.)

From the pit, Besser got a read on the mark from the electronic wall display that shows which banks are the most competitive in the major currencies. Like a video game's "top scorer" screen, better prices knock the last player off the list. For the moment, Citibank was best, selling dollars at 1.6066 marks.

A bell rang. The market was open. Besser screamed, "I'll sell 100 at 6," meaning he'd sell a hundred contracts of 125,000 marks each at the opening level, the "6" denoting the fourth digit right of the decimal. This first trade would total about $7.8 million. Besser keeps most trades only long enough to scalp a small profit or shed a smaller loss. Even if he were to hold his positions longer, he would never risk anything near the whole contract amount, only its incremental change in price.

Others in the pit and on the phones also screamed prices and, like Besser, scanned the floor for market clues. Information flows in murkily, and some traders divine it better than others. Besser eyes the pit brokers who handle business coming from off the floor, mostly from large investors, brokerage houses, and banks. Another clue is in the hand signals of the clerks communicating prices to pit brokers. They signal so fast they beat the electronic pricing boards by several seconds. Often Besser spots the direction of the market in the key instant before the hand-flashed orders hit the pit. "You have to be one of the best traders in the world to make it down here," he told me.

> MY DUTCH VISITORS WERE AMAZED AT THE CHEAPNESS OF THE DOLLAR, WHICH LEFT ME FEELING PAUPERIZED AND ASHAMED

The prices on the walls feed traders data on all the world's markets. Above me were the latest values for metals, petroleum, IBM stock, Eurodollar bonds, soy beans, pork-belly futures, and live calves. For Besser, and all the other currency traders, the most important figure to watch is the price of U.S. Treasury bond futures. These futures, traded at the nearby Chicago Board of Trade, rise and fall according to the fluctuating yields of the U.S. government's thirty-year Treasury bonds, the

chased the bonds of countries that offered the
and economic stability. No more. The early
1994 rate hikes by the Federal Reserve failed to
halt the dollar's decline, indicating that the
decreasing faith
in the long-term
value of dollar-
denominated in-
vestments. The
loss of bonds as a
currency-market
predictor meant
that Besser now
faced a complex riddle. "All the factors that
traders rely on are working backward," he said.
"You can feel it in the pit. The signs the traders
have watched for years aren't pointing to the
things they used to."

the Commerce
Department figure for durable-goods orders,
which was due out at 7:30. Trading was spotty
and desperate before the figure was released. A
few traders screamed for prices but got no tak-
ers. As 7:30 neared, all eyes lifted to the news
ticker over the clock. Economists estimated a
, which, if
true, would reflect a strengthening economy
and presage inflation—all good for trading.
Trivia filled the tape before the key number. No
(15.4 percent) crossed the board at 7:29. But af-
a low .1 percent — the market sat eerily quiet for
a couple of minutes. It wasn't immediately clear
whether the surprising figure was noise or news.
Traders watched the hands of the clerks to see
which big players would jump first.

By the end of the day, the trading had left
most everyone frustrated. Interest-rate markets
again proved their independence from the cur-
But few
caught the move. Besser, upset, said his day had
been difficult. Early on he had made a poor trade
that cost him $1.2 in a matter of minutes, and

"Most traders tie up their self-esteem and
self-worth with their P&L on a line," Besser said,
"and your success or lack of it intensifies every-
thing you feel about yourself. You blame your-
self for every bad trade." Besser also said he be-
lieves that his role in the world economy,
though admittedly small, is vital. "If ever
like me who trades didn't show up, inte
tional business would grind to a halt. W
the Toyota company needs a market in do
for yen, we provide that service, the linc
in the globalization of the economy."

By the last day, Besser believed he had
market pegged. In his new view, a declin
interest rates would help stabilize the dolla
he planned to track the bond market's e
on the stock market. "People with dolla
nominated assets," he said, "are very ca
with them. I'm going to watch the stock
ket. If interest rates decline, the deman
stocks will go up, encouraging the large [m
al] funds to stay in the U.S. market and
ing them realize that they need dollars."
view was counter to that of many market
lysts who have noted the huge rush an
American investors to foreign stocks and
currencies that buy them. Last year $175
lion moved out of U.S. investment portf
to investments abroad. The year before
outflow was half that. Nevertheless, Be
theory proved predictive—for that day at

In the weeks that followed our
the dollar was knocked down aga

Although traders like Besser and
banks compete among themselves for pr
they often see themselves pitted against
traders at the Federal Reserve, who ar
tempting to stabilize the value of the dolla
course, for private-sector traders, a succe
Fed intervention would suck out the d
volatility they thrive on. But the Fed rarely
its way for long, and if it did it would l
scare the private sector off and end up pla
alone. The bank has unlimited access to m
and the power to control the market's unc
ing fundamentals through monetary poli
and it doesn't care much if its trades lose a
hundred million. Happily for market tra
the Fed is neither sufficiently committed
ruthless enough to frighten them.

Officially, the New York Federal Re
Bank, in Manhattan, is the fiscal agent to
U.S. Treasury, and any decision to inter
is made jointly. Treasury officials watch
markets from Washington and at set t
each day confer with the New York Fed's
ing desk. "We have a conference call
day at 2:30," explained John Lange,
heads the Treasury's Office of Foreign
change, "and we consult about the ma
but of course we don't intervene every
Lange's job is to keep Secretary Bentsen
rent. If the markets are unusually vola
members of the Federal Reserve Board als
calls, and so might foreign central ban

...r the Treasury and Fed decide to strike ...y dollars, for example—public moneys are drawn from funds earmarked for currency plays.

The traders I met liked going head-to-head ... the might of the federal government, and ...onfident they could beat the guys who ... money. Many were hoping the central ... would again come at them, again take ... best shot. Certainly some of the traders' ...lence derived from the fact that the pri... sector market has grown so huge that ... billions of dollars' worth of intervention ...opped up quick... ...s University of ...igo finance pro... ...r Robert Aliber ...ained, "We live ...world in which ...te parties have a ...f money in rela... ...to timid authori... ...Official attempts ...lk up the market ...k traders as asi... ..., especially the ...the Clinton Ad... ...stration acted in ... Within days of ...another, Secre... Bentsen told an ...ence in New ... that the Unit... ...States sought a ...onger dollar," ...merce Secretary Ron Brown said in ...nington that a weak dollar would help the ...ed States, and President Clinton told re... ...rs at the G-7 economic summit in Italy ...he saw the short-term level of the dollar ...either here nor there. Dollar selling fol... ...d all three remarks. Two traders I spoke ... said they were bothered by government ...rvention—one because "it wasn't Bill ...ton's money they were spending," the oth... ...ecause the Federal Reserve traders, unlike ... can rack up huge losses buying a falling ...r and still keep their jobs. (The Fed does ...rt its performance. In 1992 the bank ...ved a $314 million loss on foreign ex... ...ge but got some back in 1993 with an $80 ...ion profit. How much has the Fed spent ... year? Although the amount is easily calcu... ...l each day on the Fed's computers, 1994's ...lts will not be available until this spring.) ...he dollar's drop also brought the added ...sure of insulting the Clinton Administra... . One trader, who said she will support ... Quayle for president, told me Clinton de-



served it, that his mishandling of the ... "will return Republicans to the White ... for the next four terms." Most of the trad... talked to didn't merely distrust Clinton; they hated his guts. A fund manager told me, "I hate the fact that the man is going to socialize the medical establishment, that he lies about everything, and that his wife is so powerful and she is pretty damn certain to be a lesbian. A lesbian in the White House." He said his clients felt the same way. I asked what made him think Hillary Clinton was a lesbian. "Come on!" he said.

Does hatred of the Clintons affect the value of the dollar? Probably. "Traders think that the Clinton Administration is made up of buffoons," a currency-desk manager at a large Chicago-based bank told me. "We're at the point where there isn't anything the administration can do that would get traders' respect," he added with some glee. He said that his whole young staff "is made up of people making well into six figures and is totally pissed off that Clinton raised their taxes . . . they regret they missed out on the boom of the Reagan years. It can't help but color their judgment and make them more confident in the dollar's downward moves."

The Merc traders, however eager they were to bash Clinton, aren't the big players: only about about 1 percent of all the world's foreign-exchange transactions cross the floor of the Merc. If I wanted to see the next level of currency traders—the ones who place bets in the hundreds of millions of dollars—then I would need to find a trader who worked for one of the big money-center banks. I found Karl Chalupa, an eleven-year veteran of the currency markets who works for the Chicago headquarters of ABN AMRO, the Netherlands' biggest bank. ABN AMRO has built what industry insiders describe as one of the most technologically advanced trading rooms in the world. Chalupa is a proprietary trader. His job is to speculate with money his bank has given him to trade. As long as he makes money, he has latitude to trade it almost any



meager understanding of an economist

the conflict between charting and fundam
analysis by applying stochastic measures,
linear time-series analyses, and some
things I didn't understand. He's one of a
group of financial professionals who
scientific literature for theories and formu
into their market analyses. Chaos th
the physics that explains how the flappi
butterfly wings can stir a hurricane, is h
the moment.

Chalupa told me his mode
created some great successe
rode the entire bull market in s
up in the 1980s, was short d
the 1987 crash, and had pred
and capitalized on the fizzling d
To rule out any emotionalism
trading, Chalupa rigorously fo
the instructions spit out by his
puter each morning, placin
trades by 9:15 and letting then
until his model tells him to cl
his position. "I don't wear a pa
pocket quote machine," he tol
"I can't stand them."

Chalupa said that with so
traders watching the same cha
was crucial to have a differen
tem, one that predicts—reaso
well at least—the direction
dollar before the stampede in
market by the chart-watching
nical traders and news-watching fundame
ists. Chalupa cited a Federal Reserve
showing that only 25 percent of the d
price changes have anything to do with
tifiable economic indicators, such as infl
interest rates, and what economists cal
chasing power parity, the ability of a cur
to buy the same items in its own country
would abroad. (Purchasing power parity
particularly meaningless lately betwee
United States and Japan; the price of a d
personal computer in New York equa
price of four watermelons in Tokyo.) The
er 75 percent of the dollar's moves defy
tification, Chalupa added. I found this r
interesting, given that my governmen
committing huge sums to th
bilization of its currency.

Broadly speaking, Karl Chalupa at
AMRO and other bank traders work the
market as Cliff Besser at the Merc, but
are significant differences between them
Merc trades publicly, which banks, prot
of their clients and information, do not
bank market is also one hundred times

Merc's marketers, like Besser, claim that
gent behind the great growth in currency
g is the internationalization of business,
l causes a burgeoning population of ex-
rs and importers to hedge their mounting
n-exchange risks. Recent surveys, howev-
veal that only between 5 and 10 percent
money traded was for a non-financial
ner, such as an importer or exporter; the
as speculative, mostly bet by banks.

rey Frankel, former senior international
mist at the Council of Economic Advi-
nd now at the Institute for International
omics, says the huge speculative trade
g financial institutions may mean that
of the trading is "noise trading"—that is,
tional speculators acting on data before
ing whether it's material or trivial. Since
lators bet billions on information that
amounts to much, the currency market
gs more wildly than economic circum-
es warrant, as the market both diminishes
oise and pumps up new.

ne of that speculation would be worth
taking if the cost of betting were high.
s, for instance, don't wager big on curren-
hat are subject to state-enforced ex-
ge controls, such as the Chinese renmin-
r on the illiquid currencies of smaller
omies, like the Zambian kwacha. By con-
the trade in the world's leading curren-
especially among banks, glides in the in-
nk market, where traders can reverse the
e of their own millions almost instantly
st a few pennies. Ironically, it is the same
encies government planners have urged
he rest of America's businesses that have
ased the non-economic, purely specula-
rade in money. The changes have opened
ce for a tide of speculative money so large
it taxes all government efforts to control
he news crossing traders' computers,
her budget data, job statistics, interest-
hikes in the United States, political assas-
ons, a bribery scandal in Tokyo, or saber
ng in Iraq, is all worth taking a shot on. If
oise ends up news, the trader may catch a
trend. If not, what the hell? There's
more noise/news coming.

By now I understood most of the short-
causes of currency volatility, but I still
't seen the weight of the largest market
rs. "The super-successful traders," David
s, the senior mark trader at First National
of Chicago, told me, "are the guys who
the orders they have, such as a customer
wants to sell $100, and they sell $120.
way they risk $20 dollars of their own and
120 worth of oomph from the trade." For
Lucas, like all interbank traders, [illegible]
hand for $1 million. He wouldn't [illegible]
how much foreign-exchange business First
Chicago does every day, only that it [illegible]
equal to the value of everything traded daily
the New York Stock Exchange. And he [illegible]
one bank with sixty traders.

When Lucas gets an order that gives his trade
"oomph," he, like Merc trader Cliff Besser,
hopes to ride it only a short distance for a quick
profit. "The sexy way to trade," Lucas said, "is to
have a proprietary account and catch a big
move. But, to be honest, the way to make mon-
ey is to buy and sell as many times as possible."

First Chicago has a sweepingly graceful
headquarters, curving up from a wide base into
a slender skyscraper at the heart of Chicago's
Loop. The building sits beside a sunken white
plaza and a pastel mosaic of angels and spirits
Marc Chagall designed for it. On the seventh
floor is the bank's vast trading room, called its
treasury. I'd been warned that banks hide their
trading operations—in part to protect trading
customers, but also
because they fear
the banking public
would take unkind-
ly to the mam-
moth, free-wheel-
ing way that banks
trade their money.
One secret that
banks have kept
well is that throughout the 1980s and early
1990s, trading operations—along with con-
sumer-credit divisions—were the top profit
centers at many large banks and propped up
their core business of lending.

ONLY 25 PERCENT OF THE DOLLAR'S PRICE CHANGES ARE DUE TO ECONOMIC INDICATORS; 75 PERCENT DEFY QUANTIFICATION

Lucas, a husky six-footer with a round bari-
tone voice, moved through the trading room
nodding and joking with his coworkers. I no-
ticed that he was remarkably relaxed about
what I was seeing, given the sums involved. His
trading room was as big, although not as chaot-
ic, as the trading floor of most major ex-
changes, and it was obviously managing a flood
of business. Lucas saw me shaking my head as I
looked around. "Some people here worried that
letting you in would compromise our customers
or reveal things about the business we don't
want public," he said, amused. "But I thought
you wouldn't understand most of what you
were looking at anyway." He was right.

Whereas ABN AMRO's much smaller trad-
ing room was built from scratch with the latest
technology, First Chicago's room was jerry-built
with multiple generations of equipment. Four
computer monitors, from small to large, and
two keyboards cover Lucas's desk space. He can
speed around in his chair from screen to [illegible]

labels, with names like [illegible] Fordham

sounded like the start of a subway P.A. system. But the prices quoted hit Lucas's ears loud and clear. "I can hear it in the bathroom," he said. Two switchable microphones snaked out of the [illegible] by the brokers against one another.

Unlike the futures markets, which are strictly [illegible] and Exchange [illegible] by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the much larger interbank market is governed by a slender, voluntary rule book. No regulator can rein in banks all over the world, and domestic regulators fear that placing controls on their countries' banks [illegible] What keeps banks honest is the need for players to play again. "We really rely on other banks for liquidity," Lucas said, "and they rely on us."

OVERLAYING VOICES OF THE WORLD'S TOP CURRENCY BROKERS, THE BILLION-DOLLAR GO-BETWEENS

Lucas's growth as a trader paralleled First Chicago's. He said that when he started, a $20 million trade was enough to perk up the desks, but now $50 million trades are routine, and $250 million trades can occur without a move in the market. Oddly, though the interbank market handles the world's largest transactions, banks charge no commission for their currency trading. "It's worth it for us just to have the information about what others are doing," Lucas said. As for his trading system? "Everything I need to know," he said, "I learn from the orders customers have given us." That luxury, getting an advance read on the psychology of the market, is what Lucas calls "the franchise." It means he has hard data, *in* [illegible] which tell him where and when there will be heavy dollar buying and selling.

For the most competitive banks, one of the customers asking for prices can be none other than the Federal Reserve. The banks that then get the Fed's considerable business are those [illegible] the best intelligence. For the banks that get the trades,

bonanza, for the banks can piggyback on Fed's order. Or they may see the interven as creating an artificial level in the market trade against it. Or do both, in succession. franchise.

Lucas estimates that there are about 2 currency traders in the world with enough to make them worth watching—a small n ber, considering the enormity of the ma Traders without a money-center bank " chise," like Cliff Besser at the Merc and Chalupa at ABN AMRO, run on wits, and chicken bones. Not everyone can si profits off this whirlpool of money. "Fo most part," Henry Gonzalez, the populis mocratic congressman from Texas, tol House banking committee earlier this year main beneficiaries of currency interventio speculators, yet the Treasury Departmen the Federal Reserve continue to place te billions of dollars of taxpayer funds at risk."

But what did it mean to Lucas that he advantage of the dollar's decline? "The is kind of our national stock," he told me most of my career the dollar has been down. But I hate that. . . . It's like there's ternational referendum on our country we're not getting the A's. The down wounds my psyche. . . . But," he added naughty smile, "that doesn't mean I

> hit the bid [and sell dollars] w think they're going down."

Paul A. Volcker, the Federal Reserve beatified by the financial community for r in the double-digit inflation of the 197 committed his clout to an effort to stabil change rates, precisely because of their te cy to fluctuate excessively. Volcker, th the private Bretton Woods Commission, was recently established to lobby again dollar's free float, argues that volatile cu markets waste huge economic resource more dangerously, fuel calls for protecti Yet neither government bankers nor the most sophisticated trading organizatio sort good economic data from bad. voodoo, one wonders, would the world conjure a level at which to fix currencie same voodoo that traders use to make bets? Even the best magic is unlikely to the huge currency markets for long. Fixe ended under Nixon because his domestic da could not support the Fed's commitm stabilize all the world's money. Since th ministrations have often found their mo policies at odds with their currency targ any case, banks and their traders make on excessive fluctuation and would no lend their considerable clout to fighting

of exchange rates. And that's not just po-
clout. More tearsome is the interbank
t's new high-volume might, which can
whatever economic sandbags central
erect to contain volatility.

ll this, it occurred to me that I had been
in thinking that the dollar was *my* cur-
and that its losses were my losses. Last
he United States' economy amounted to
rcent of the world economy, yet
rcent of the world's currency re-
are dollars, reflecting a lot of off-
activity by foreign central banks
nominally national currency. It is
sign that the world still holds dol-
its currency of choice. Moreover,
ollar has held steady against a
er index of currencies and gained
st the currencies of some of our
st trading partners, like Canada,
co, France, and Britain.

er the long run, traders and econ-
ts argue, currencies reach their
r levels as long-range trends play
But over the long run there are lots
ort runs during which manufac-
volatility, emotionalism, and mis-
hgs of data rule the market. And as
as traders can churn volatility up,
nore they get of the same. Which is
, the more money they will make.

overnment intervention was until recently
ful tool for quelling dollar volatility, espe-
it the Fed, acting in concert with the
al banks, launched its attack unexpectedly
ollowed it up with verbal bravado. But in
of the failed interventions of May and
it is time to reassess what even a perfectly
ned intervention might accomplish. There
simply be too much money out there for
vention to be effective. Some market
hers, like Volcker, have suggested that
rnment intervention could work if it were
r coordinated and more forceful. One pro-
l solution would be to create a giant fund
h, perhaps a trillion dollars, that it would
the most intrepid private-sector traders.
tough call whether such a massive price-
rt system for money could work less mis-
y than, say, the price supports for milk or
an sugar. One scary prospect of massive
rnment fiddling is that it would *increase*
dollar's volatility by feeding the pool of
ey that bank traders churn and skim.

en if the Federal Reserve had enough
ey on hand to bully the trillion-dollar
rketplace, the *method* of its intervention
mean that its efforts are virtually guaran-
to fail. To keep intervention from playing
c with domestic bank reserves, the Feder-
al Reserve "sterilizes" its currency [illegible]
fect reversing those trades in the dome
bond market. Thus, if the government
marks and buys dollars on the interbank mar-
ket, for instance, it counters the resulting
drain on the money supply by turning around
and buying U.S. government bonds, pushing
the money back into the system. Such a strate-
gy is an exercise in impotence. Helen Popper,



once an economist at the Federal Reserve and
now at Santa Clara University, has studied
the data on the Fed's interventions and told
me that, at best, the effects of sterilized
intervention last no longer than two
days.

After the intervention by the United
States and other countries in late June, Cliff
Besser called me. He was happy. The markets
had been wild and the trading was good. I
asked him about the intervention. "It proves
that the governments are helpless," he said
elatedly. The dollar, he added, edged up at first
while the central banks were buying dollars,
"but the rally back [in marks and yen] was more
forceful than the intervention. The market
kicked their ass."

I still think I'm destined to be a loser in the
market. Not so much because the Japanese and
Germans are getting rich at my expense. Even
small fry like me can diversify out of dollars by
buying a managed foreign-stock fund or a cer-
tificate of deposit in marks or yen. Rather, I'm
a loser as a citizen and a taxpayer, as long as
the U.S. Treasury and the Federal Reserve
keep spending public funds on interventions,
giving dollars to the guys with the squawk box-
es and computers. ■

THE GRID

By Rick Moody

Inside, in the warm light of contemporary domesticity, her [illegible] tance to the first boy she ever [illegible] vengefully chasing their cats, the cordless phone cradled like a papoose at the interstice of ear and hand and shoulder. We can just make out the melody of her joy. We are standing outside under the window, on the front step. There's not much [illegible] The screen in the window [illegible] A taxi eases by, [illegible] e some of the vari



ables of the instant. Do I let my palm rest lightly on her shoulder, [illegible] pullover sweater? Do I pull her to me, gently? Do I let her pull me closer? It seems easy enough to do, to kiss her, as I have kissed others, [illegible] practice expand around us, like the spirits of our ancestors, like airborne pollutants. There are legislative issues surrounding us, there are sociological and aesthetic issues, there are issues of fashion. And th there's this awkward perso stuff.

Later, for example, she believe that her lips yiel too easily during this kiss, t she didn't react with an ec and opposite *frontal lip force efficient*. A kiss, she thinks, to be entirely balanced—it to have a little conflict, a li dialectic, a little revoluti And since in her view this ticular kiss didn't have th things, she will worry that doesn't know how to kis boy, really, or anyone else, t her mouth is unaccustome the proximity of other mou and this worry will trouble on the afternoons when should be working on her sertation. During a period which we are again briefly ing, she will ask me to te her how to kiss. I will spen number of evenings with mouth open trying to inst and be kissed at the same time, lips fissured as a result. *No, it's be if you move really slowly at first. Sl er, even. Right, good.* Initially dur these lessons, her tongue will swab at my lips, as if she's takin tissue sample from me, but then will learn to dart with it, to dart l fully. It will be late on a Satur night when the meaning of lust come to her, and the couple in next apartment will be fucki Through the wall: *Yes, oh, faster.*

es *oh God, oh, yes, yes, deeper, oh*
es he will learn to kiss, and she will

he frayed screen in the window
e where we are standing will be
ne weak link later when her apart-
ne, this very apartment, is robbed.
y hen, however, this woman I am
s t kiss will move on and else-
h e with her new girlfriend, her fe-
ig lover. A different tenant will
a undergone the ritual initiation
f oking at the space and signing
a ease and repainting. This new
il ntant will be different in every
a blond and completely hetero-
al, or so she will say, and success-
il t least in the accumulation of
ngs. A professional woman, a fi-
a ial analyst downtown. Her spe-
e the energy industry. At work
will have an aged bumper sticker
ner Quotron machine that says,
"e people died in Ted Kennedy's
an than at Three Mile Island." One
ght while this analyst, Nina, is in a
on the Upper East Side with a
swearing a Jerry Garcia tie, a trad-
who mousses his hair and drives a
Wrangler, her apartment—
d screen and open window serv-
gs the method of ingress—will be
bed.
In the bar, in fact, she will be hav-
a first kiss with this trader, and
lighting will be low, and she will
playing with the wax from the
e candle, and then they will
h for each other—their hands
ling across the table, fingers
ing; their faces falling together,
lips colliding—and she will feel
ple of contentment for a second
will spike through her like 220
s of household current. This
tromagnetic pulse will come to
in her spine, and it will feel
t, even if she's had too many
garitas. At the same moment her
player (but not her Joan Arma-
ing and Shawn Colvin albums)
her personal computer (but not
Quicken software and Micro-
rks) and her jewelry (but not her
mont Teddy Bear) will all be car-
out the front door of her apart-
t and sold on the street. Other
people with the most rudimentary
tales of first kisses, will then enjoy
these fine personal effects.

The perpetrator of this felony will be Joe, who no longer makes love with his girlfriend, no longer disrobes in bed with her, no longer becomes aroused, no longer feels the high-pressure system of consolation, no longer recognizes that there is an equation in him that is balanced only by the presence of a certain kind of companionship, but who can, in the recesses of his semiconsciousness, recall a first kiss on a really dark night in the Bronx when he was a little bit drunk and she was, too, and this kiss was so easy, like slotting a diamond stylus into the grooves of an old LP. This is the guy who will manhandle the dangerous crosshatching of screen in the window of Nina's apartment. His first kiss with Joanne—who still lives with him—is always distant, always lost, always something from which he has lapsed or fallen. It is a hollow in him. He steals and then he cops and then, temporarily, the hollow is plugged—with an amber oblivion. Or at least this is the pattern until he gets clean and goes to Narcotics Anonymous and Drugs Anonymous and Assholes Anonymous, as he calls it, and relapses and relapses and relapses and causes the woman he loves a lot of heartache, so much that she eventually leaves, after which he goes to a halfway house and finds religion. But that's much later. On the night in question, the window in the apartment will be open and the early autumn breeze will be blowing through it and then Joe will empty out the premises.

One of the couples passing on the street that night at almost one in the morning while Joe is prying up the frayed grid of the screen, crowbarring the window grating, will consist of Eleanor and Max. They will be walking home from a dinner party, having just argued vehemently about whether to have children now or later. At the party Eleanor will have loudly remarked to a friend that children are more than *bloodthirsty dwarfs*, and

the block. And
and regretful. Max
have children now because
agrees. She will be holding
They will proceed very slowly, both
through the
ment and up the street, as if one of
the burdens of disagreement were
decreased mobility.

And neither of them will know that they are each recollecting their first kiss, which took place in Baltimore seven years ago. They were students at Hopkins. At a pitcher party. All you can drink for five dollars. A number of the carousers there became sick. One woman, Nina, visiting a frat boy for the weekend, had to have her stomach pumped. Eleanor and Max didn't get sick, however. They
It was a sloppy kiss—it tasted of beer and pizza and cigarettes, and there was a platoon of wasted school chums egging them on—but when they were through with it, when Max let go of the back of her head, let go of that handful of her blond hair, when their lips parted, when the music on the sound system unaccountably lapsed, they *laughed*. It was the most incredible laugh—for both of them. It contained all the shades of laughter: the sputtering of wonder; the chuckle of discovery; the guffaw at the idea of not being a kid and not being alone, of being part of some larger migratory pattern, some history of lovers. They decided to go
They dropped everything. Left behind their cronies. And they stayed together after that.

On the night of the robbery, Max will look up from the wow and flutter of this recollection—and from the cyclical and endless heart-to-heart about whether or not to have a baby—to see a pair of legs disappear into a ground-floor window up the block. *Holy shit*, he will say. *Did you*



Margaret Bourke-White, J. B. Priestley, Frederick Lewis Allen, Bernard DeVoto,

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Eleanor will reply flatly, *See w*
I think that apartment is b
robbed. Look at t
Really!

O
place at this very moment. At a
the pattern of the dispersal of t
kisses, it would put to shame ar
the other light-up maps use
oversimplify the scale and rang
our decaying metropolis. Ginny
Steve. Mark and Dan. Ramon
Samantha. Miles and Kay. Lola
Kim and Pete. Bernard and Elish
Eliza and Katie. The first kisse
this day alone, if they were
nessed, could realize a citywide
ings on the power grid; solar cel
a Mars shot could be developed
the money that would result as
ings. These first kisses together c
wipe away the tendency in the
boroughs toward spontaneous st
violence, except in the cases of
street violence (adulterous or
faithful first kisses). These first k
could cushion financial hards
and class differences. They c
bring the ethnicities closer tog
er—except when they would d
them farther apart (unfaithful
racial kisses). These kisses coul
sult in millions of dollars in lost
ductivity due to excessive happi
and on-the-job ennui. And it's
way because first kisses preceded
discovery of atoms by tens of th
sands of years and preceded
wheel and preceded the lever
the screw and the arrowhead and
papoose and the paving of, say,
teenth Street, where, accordin
archives kept by the Church of J
Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 14
kisses have taken place since
first humanoid amphibian crav
from the East River and gaspe

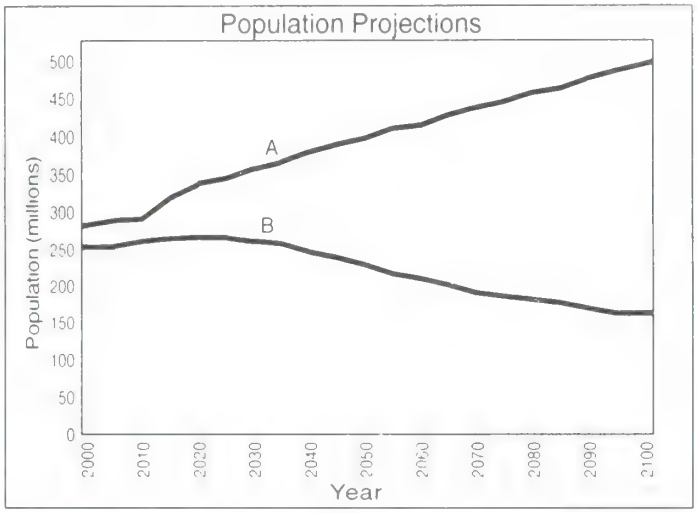
I will be crossing Sixteenth St
myself that night. The night of
robbery. While Joe is liberating
apartment of Nina's CD player
ugly Tiffany jewelry, I will be con
from the East Side. Max and Ele
will be coming from Chelsea. I wi

Going Down the Drain

That headline may not be scholarly, and the tone is perhaps too flippant for a deadly serious matter. Still, it would be hard to find a more apt description of where our country is heading as a direct result of the relentless growth of our population.

The arguments for first halting, then reversing, U.S. population growth would seem so compelling as to raise the question "Why isn't it being done?".

Line A shows where our population is headed with current levels of fertility and immigration— to nearly 400 million by 2050, and to nearly a half billion by the end of the next century!



Such population growth would surely lead to disaster for future generations of Americans. It would have profound impacts upon the environment, on renewable resources like farmland, forests and water, and on our society itself.

A smaller population would help the nation deal with the social, environmental and resource problems that confront us, yet very few of our politicians and pundits even consider the idea.

On the assumption that they are held back by unwarranted fears, we will try to explain briefly by what relatively gentle adjustments we could turn U.S. population growth around.

Line B shows what could be achieved with the "two child family" and with immigration reduced to the levels that prevailed for much of this century.

If parents indeed "stop at two" it would lead to a total fertility rate (TFR) of about 1.5 children, because not all women have children, and some have only one. A national TFR of 1.5 would make possible a gradual turnaround in the population growth that drives our social and environmental problems.

We Need to Reduce Immigration

But the two child family alone will not enable the nation to reach a smaller population size. It would need to be accompanied by a substantial reduction in current levels of immigration.

In 1900 we were a nation of less than 76 million. Almost half of the population increase since then has been post-1900 immigrants and their descendants. The Census Bureau projects that our present population of some 260 million will increase by 2050 to 392 million (middle projection), or even to 522 million (high projection).

Of the population growth anticipated for the 21st century, nearly 90 percent will be post-2000 immigrants and their descendants. In other words, immigration is the driving force behind a disastrous surge of population growth.

The average annual level of recorded gross immigration from 1924 through the 1960s was 198,000. Immigration is now over a million per year. If we were willing to bring net immigration down to 200,000 a year, our demographic future would improve dramatically.

If we moved now to the "two child family" and concurrently brought immigration under control at an annual level of 200,000, it would lead in the next century to the population projection shown in the graph *(Line B)*.

By the middle of the next century parents could even be encouraged to have more children, for a total fertility rate of 1.9. That rate would allow our nation to maintain a constant population size of around 150 million.

If, at the same time, we change our lifestyles to reduce unnecessary consumption, and use energy and materials far more efficiently, such a population size should be sustainable for the very long term.

The Choice Is Ours

We need to choose the path leading to a sustainable U.S. population of around 150 million. To get there we would need the combination of the two child family and a moderate net immigration of 200,000 a year. What would be so difficult about that?

We need, above all, the courage to make now the decisions that would safeguard our demographic future. We urge Third World nations to bite the bullet and face up to their demographic problems. How about doing it ourselves?

by Donald Mann, President

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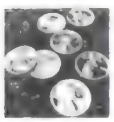
Fortune's Child

A Portrait of the United States as a Spoiled Heir

From the Editor of Harper's Magazine

Lewis H. Lapham

FORTUNE'S CHILD



A scathing commentary on the [illegible] American fortune. Lapham investigates examples of the [illegible] extravagance [illegible] ship of the Kennedy family, [illegible] and the rhetoric of environmentalism. [illegible] the essays examine the [illegible] ment that has led to a dissolute foreign policy, a general loss of courage and humor, [illegible] ider of democracy.

A wise and comic indictment of the postwar generation [illegible]

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looking at my feet, dragging my heels [illegible]

I will realize then that I will pass this window even in years in which [illegible] elsewhere, in SoHo, and I will be [illegible], just as I am sad in the years when I am not [illegible] on a variety of missions, both aimless and purposeful. I will pass the spot at 151 West Sixteenth — and when I pass I will remember and be glad and the only thing sadder than that, the only thing sadder, will be when I forget and am sad for forgetting. Sadness will mark the period with her and the period after and the time in between, and it will even mark — a little bit — my next first kiss, which [illegible] will be with Eleanor, who is [illegible] divorced.

Meanwhile, the drama of the robbery will begin. I will meet Eleanor's eyes as we pass. Joe will fall into Nina's apartment through the open window. Banging his knee. Seizing the [illegible]. And right then the All-state representative who sold Nina her renter's policy will be kissing his wife, and his daughter will be kissing her boyfriend (in a Mustang in the parking lot at the Roosevelt Mall), and her best friend, Alene, will be kissing a boy named Nick, whose cousin Tony will be benevolently [illegible] which [illegible] and Ty, the first councilman of Roslyn, Long Island, who will be kissing a seventeen-year-[illegible] in the closet town, [illegible] which [illegible] will be kissing his mistress, Caro, whose boyfriend is back in her apartment in Bay Ridge, actually kissing Caro's [illegible] on scholarship to the state school in [illegible] kissing his academic adviser (consensually but even so inadvisably), Kather Miller, Ph.D., who has kissed seve of her students, as she herself v kissed by Leonard Blandings, t novelist, who was fired from one u versity for kissing a female stud who was herself just discovering t she was a lesbian, who was discov ing that nothing was fixed in her l that all was drift and erosion and t the road to her identity would be tered with broken hearts and unf filled crushes until at last she fou this girl at the Clit Club and th went back to this girl's place on S teenth Street in the m dle of a blizzard and kiss

But before all that, before these things happen in this order a in this way, before I go on to k others and you do, too (and perh in this way you and I have someth close to a kiss), *I have to kiss Sus* the woman to whom I have pled myself for this brief instant. And s do. Her face is small and round, she has enormous blue eyes t seem to say that *all the stuff you thinking is true*, melancholy eyes, e with a sorrowful determination, a she has lips made for kissing, ma for the sympathetic gesture, made declarations of affection. I am cl to her face now and lacing my fing around the back of her, the better make the instant irrevocable, a then I am grazing her lips with m measuring their pitch and arc a force, and then we are falling i the lassitude of kisses where I am ing to dwell. We are together. Eve thing, even the busted lamp above on the step, and the job I'm going lose, and her brother who is going die, and the way she will leave later, and the apartment that will robbed, and the people spinning around us, all this doesn't matter the moment, and that's the wa prefer to remember it, before our part, with her roommate cackling the background on the phone w the boy who first made her dan Her roommate dancing in that l wattage as she talks to him, that f boy, pressing the light-up buttons the sentimental jukebox of hum affiliations, singing, knowing, membering.

MORALITY PLAYS

Singing psalms with the White House choir

By Benjamin DeMott

Late last July, when people of high principle gathered here in Washington for a White House conference on "Character Building for a Democratic, Civil Society," stories about Bill Clinton's character were dominating the news, along with speculation about how many millions in lawyers' fees Whitewater and Paula Jones might wind up costing the First Family. The conclave, however, wasn't about the "character problem" of the person in the White House. This was a White House conference about building character in us.



The host was the President's deputy assistant for domestic affairs: a political-science professor named William A. Galston. The conference organizer was The Communitarian Network, founded in 1991 by the sociologist Amitai Etzioni. The well over 200 character-building attendees were foot soldiers in America's mighty army of worriers about our declining moral fiber. The army's commanders were, of course, household names. Dan Quayle, of the mantra "Dan Quayle Was Right"; William Bennett, of *The Book of Virtues*; the First Lady her-

Benjamin DeMott's many books include The Imperial Middle: Why Americans Can't Think Straight About Class (Morrow, 1990). Created Equal (*HarperCollins*), *his latest on social class, will appear this fall. His most recent article for* Harper's Magazine, *"Chaos Academic Pork," which appeared in the December 1993 issue.*

self, concerned about the "politics of personal meaning"; Peggy Noonan, announcing that "the New Frontier of the Nineties is an inner one."

The White House conferees consisted of foundation executives, school superintendents, "activist mothers," social scientists, church leaders, youth leaders, air force colonels, congressional aides, high school teachers, and front persons and lobbyists for such outfits as the Character Counts Coalition, the Character Education Partnership, the Center for Civic Education, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Unlike their leaders, they were not celebrities; but like their leaders, they were wicked worrywarts—handwringers united by absolute certitude regarding the existence of a "crisis of values," an "erosion of culture," the need to "restore moral order," "get [illegible] bigger," and so on. (I was there by invitation.)

The announced purpose of the meeting was to "deliberate" on various character-education proposals, some of which were before Congress—a bill, for instance, appropriating $6 million to finance "the design and implementation of character education programs." The conference schedule called for morning and afternoon small-group sessions at the National Press Club, with speeches afterward, at the Old Executive Office Building, by cabinet members, senators, and a possible mystery guest. (A pre-conference mailing pointedly emphasized that Deputy Assistant Galston was well regarded by the First Lady: "Hillary Clinton . . . acknowledges that she has been most influenced by the writings of Vaclav Havel and William Galston.")

Arriving early at the Press Club building on Fourteenth Street, I was directed to a top floor. Big lobbies and banquet rooms done up in mannish mahogany and [illegible] leather—[illegible] boardroom look suitable for magnates, not beat reporters. The corridors were filling with dressy, middle-aged, mainly WASP-featured types, the [illegible] "[illegible]" [illegible] blazer to a silk floral print as I edged past toward Registration. "I'm over

The Golan Heights

To Whom Do They Belong? Can Israel Survive Without Them?

What are the facts?

Historical Background—

Syria and its President—Syria is classified by the U.S. State Department as a narcotic dealing state. Its main

Western influ

Syria's President, Hafez Assad, is a tyrant, every bit as cunning as his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam Hussein. Under Assad, Syria is a world center for terrorism. It still harbors Nazi bigwigs who found welcome there after the World War. Few doubt that Assad was the mastermind in the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans died, and in the explosion of PanAm flight #103 in which 270 people lost their lives. He oversees one of the

est narcotic operations in the world.

Military Security—The Golan is [illegible] 10 miles wide, with a plateau on either side of a crest. If it were part of

importance to Israel. Its high ground provides early warning capability, without which Israel would be subject to surprise attack by the Syrians. Its loss would obligate Israel to maintain a state of readiness and mobilization that would be economically and socially untenable. On the Golan itself, there are only two natural terrain bottlenecks through which tanks can advance. Those choke points are defensible and made possible the repulse of the 1400 Syrian tanks that attacked Israel in the 1973 war. But with the Golan in Syrian hands, and without the radar installations that would give Israel warning of any military movements, thousands of tanks—backed up by missiles and airplanes—could overrun Israel in a matter of hours. The Golan does not make for perfect defense, but it gives Israel a small breathing space for mobilization.

> "With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs [illegible] confident of defeat, and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction."

The Golan is the source of over one-third of Israel's fresh water. In 1964, with the Golan in Syrian hands, Syria attempted to divert these headwaters and to cripple Israel's water supply. It is more than likely that, given another opportunity, Syria would once again attempt to destroy Israel's water supply.

The current Israeli government, in its keen desire to bring peace to its people, after almost fifty years of war and bloodshed, would seem prepared to give up the limited strategic security it now enjoys by virtue of its possession of the high ground—the ridges of Judea Samaria (the "West Bank") and of the Golan Heights. But Israel should not return to the "death trap" borders of 1967 or anything close to it. In order to survive within such borders, Israel would have to rely on the goodwill of the Arab states, all of which—except for the cold peace with Egypt—are still in a declared state of war with Israel. An aggressor will attack only if confident of victory. With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat, and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction.

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East

■ [illegible]

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Name

State

mmunity, we'll be sunk."

iscreetly my hand slid south, aging in my backpack. I in- d the history of the Character s Coalition into the Confer- Guide and browsed as I lis- d.

he talk around me sounded , embattled; there was much use e word "politics." A pertina- s, diminutive social scientist ed Myriam Miedzian complained "there's nothing here about en- nment. . . . These kids are wired morning to night." A lady from on dwelled on the completeness ir indoctrination provided by her s character-education program local "value-word of the week" scribed everywhere, including ol cafeteria place mats). Charles nes of Vanderbilt University's dom Forum complained that at's missing for me is . . . civic e, the public square, rights, citi- hip. If we begin there, it's easier rve out the role for schools." An nt-voiced elderly party com- ed that "there are no students " and praised the private school n in Bath, Maine—an institu- n in which "students discover the ose of societal values for them- es." "The way you really teach es," said this gentleman trucu- ly, is by giving students "a ce to explore their own nature."

Don't give me paradigms," I d somebody say behind me, not e claiming the floor. "I'm sick of digms. Let's *do* it."

o anger, no raised voices—but ndertone of edgy imminent mil- cy, as though it went without ng that enemies close by were ling for a firefight. What ene- s? The conferees were against die porn, broken homes, getting ed, rudeness, laziness, murder in schoolyard. Who exactly was *for* e things? Even the wildly left- ning, far-out *New York Times* n't advocate divorce or school- l slaughter.

he thought came that the poli- of personal character or personal ning might amount merely to a es of *no* politics. Nothing in it longing to transform all public es into simple matters of good personal conduct versus bad—to- gether, perhaps, with fear of dealing with the demands of fairness in so- cial policy.

Sixties bashing had resumed among my fellow deliberators. Pulling a fresh sheaf of documents from my backpack, I was aware of a new restlessness in the rows—a re- action, maybe, to the dismal, shut- in cell. The facilitator began push- ing harder for consensus. First Lady quips commenced. "I thought," said a front-row wit, "I thought we were just going to hand all this along to Hillary."

It was time for lunch.

Everybody from Prince Philip to Ken Burns has lectured in the National Press Club's storied mile- high banquet room, but the place serves a lousy meal. Wisely, the con- ference managers had extracted pay- ment for lunch ($25) weeks before. Chicken-like pork or pork-like chicken, gallons of iced tea, circular tables seating ten. The university dean on my left told me he connect- ed "character buffs" with New Ageism—a movement that interest- ed him. The young, pretty, elegantly dressed utilities rep on my right was uncommunicative.

A U.S. congressman who had au- thored many character-education bills was the main speaker; he quot- ed the wisdom of "the English poet Wadsworth." There was a panegyric on Sir John Marks Templeton, "the dean of global investing" and him- self a character-education guru. Sir John's "Laws of Life Essay Contest" claims to provide "a unique opportu- nity to positively impact core values of a school"; his book *Discovering the Laws of Life*—free copies for all con- ferees—contains forty weeks of one- per-school-day "moral" lessons. (Week Twenty-Four, Law E: "Kind- ness comes back, like a boomerang, to those who are kind.")

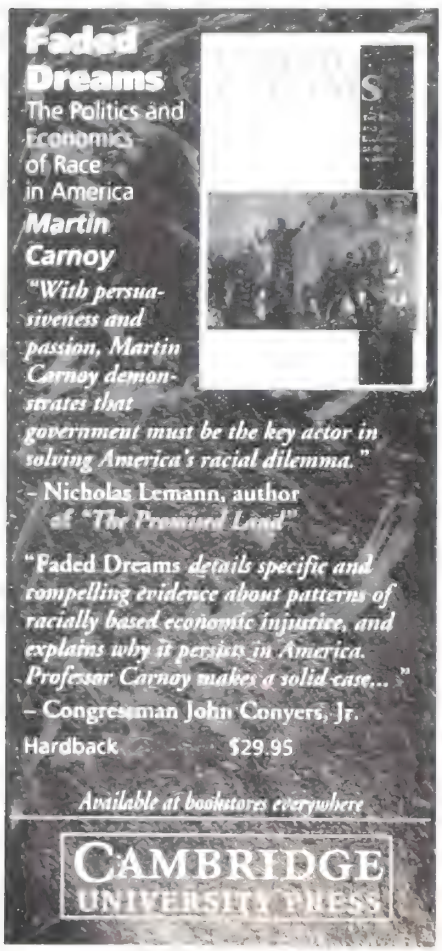
No mystery guest showed. Relax- ing in the Press Club library after cof- fee, I admired sunshiny Washington spread wide below. Outside in the lobby two air force character builders were discussing their uniforms. One was testing a new Defense Depart- ment model. The other felt the ma-





AMERICAN PORTFOLIOS

AMERICAN PORTFOLIOS



[illegible] into quiet time [illegible] backpack.

R [illegible] current [illegible] reflects [illegible] popularity of [illegible] into the educat[illegible] furious activity of the organization called the [illegible] Coalition. The hot [illegible] the moment is, naturally, schoolyard mayhem. "Why character education?" asks a Character Counts Coalition handout, and it answers with "A FEW FACTS": a daily average of 16,000 crimes are committed on school property, a fifth of high school students say they're scared to use the lavatories, 135,000 students carry firearms to school, and so on. Kids screw up, so goes the concept, because they haven't been taught not to.

But the watershed moment in the recent history of character mongering seems not to have been some particular eruption of school violence or children killing children. The moment described at length in another CC handout—occurred two years ago, during school vacation, in Aspen, Colorado, and involved the Twenty Nine Character Counts "Declaration Signatories"—citizens who climbed the mount to frame a new covenant.

Moses at Horeb this occasion was not, one gathered. Instead of a single prophet there were a couple of rooms full—"values education coordinators," "character education specialists," members of state education boards, psychologists in number, businesspeople (including the presidents of Good Idea Kids, Inc., and Sports Learning Systems, Inc.), and the angel of the entire enterprise one "Michael Josephson, Esq.: President and CEO, Joseph and Edna Josephson Institute of Ethics, Marina del Ray, CA." Turned off by the wordiness of Old Testament commandments, the Twenty Nine chose [illegible] to talk about six "pillars" (respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, caring, fairness, and citizenship—were all one-word jobs). And instead of the sound of the voice of God the mountain speaking out of midst of the fire, the printed t scripts were filled with foxy grat manipulativeness and stand brand mulishness—people diggin for "religious reverence" as oppo to "reverence," for "persistence opposed to "perseverance."

MICHAEL JOSEPHSON: I would like to propose instead of "hon the word "trustworthiness." It volves a more subtle area, somet a lack of candor. You know, yo think they're being honest, somet as long as they don't lie. But s times not saying can be a betray trust. We can embody some o things, like loyalty, etc.

[illegible] Institute of C now are you guys going to dis this? All right. Great. So the co sation right now is on honesty v trustworthiness as to the best des tor of this value.

KEVIN RYAN: You've got down "work ethic." And I'd just menti value that I think is really missi American life, and certainly Am can schools, is persistence.

SYLVIA PETERS: Perseverance.

RYAN: As I look at my own dren, one of the things I want t to do is be persistent. Learn ho stay with a task.

BERRETH: Okay. That's a new v you want on the list?

RYAN: Yeah. You might put it alternative to the work ethic.

BERRETH: Okay. Are there any ers?

MIKE CAROTTA: It was on or these lists. I think it was called s thing about "spiritual reverence something to that effect. I would to propose it and see where it goe

BERRETH: Okay. Do you want read "reverence" or "spiritual re ence"?

CAROTTA: "Spiritual reverence

Roughly the same level of tal in my small group.

In addition to a nascent apo late (the Designated Signatorie

Mike Carotta is the former direct religious education for Boys Town, braska; Diane Berreth is deputy exec director of the Association for Superv and Curriculum Development; Kevin is director of the Center for the Adv ment of Ethics and Character at Bo University; Sylvia Peters is a founding ner of the Edison Project.

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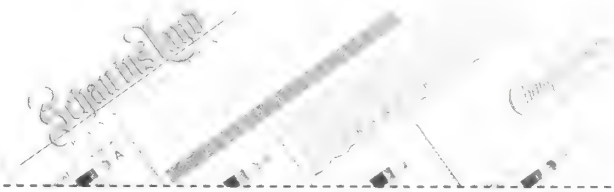
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...pen Declaration), Character ...n's has Magnum P.I.—Tom ...k for its "national spokes-r." It has more than fifty member ...zations, from the American ...ation of Teachers to Little ... Baseball. Operating on an ...l budget of $300,000, it pro-... an array of "Six Pillars" logo ...cts, including not just lapel ...out patches, posters, "ethical ...nt bombs" (wallet cards bear-...essages: "Ethics is not for ..."), T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats ... works.

...l because the signatories were ...on the ground with selected ...s, the coalition has a head start ...ing character-education mate-...s—an advantage they've eagerly ...ited in schools all across the ...try, from Brooklyn to Tyler, ... Lone Star enthusiasm is espe-...l high, said a *Wall Street Journal* ... included in the CC package. ...y schools declare a value of the ...h, which businesses advertise ...signs in store windows or on ...ards along the highway. Police ...rs hand out baseball-style cards ...ing their pictures on the front ...heir favorite value on the back. ...ometimes, officers riding in ... cars will turn on their sirens ...top children for doing a good ... giving them a certificate that ...s them to enter a school raffle."

...st important, the coalition has ...r in its pocket. Sixteen senators ...epresentatives were primary ...sors of a Character Counts ... resolution approved by Con-... When President Clinton pro-...ed National Character Counts ... in October, he said: "I call on ...eople of the United States and ...ested groups to embrace these ...Core Elements of Character [he ...d the CC pillars, one by one] ... observe the week with appro-... ceremonies and activities . . . ...rat[ing] these Six Core Elements ...haracter into programs serving students and children."

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... the afternoon session our ... had a new facilitator and a ...rapporteur, but no large change ...bject or improvement in the

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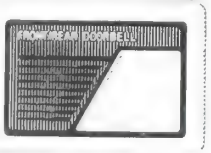
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air. Colonel David Wagie, dir
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of military successes in "addre
via "the character perspective
"the character approach," and
"cases." Differences of view
among the character builders
clearer. Sitting with us was the
of the Character Education Pa
ship, a former school superinten
named A. John Martin. The
nership helps communities
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bearing precooked virtues like C
acter Counts. Neither does the
er powerhouse in character po
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Freedom Forum man who talk
the morning session, the c
seeks to revitalize civics educ
the public square, etc.

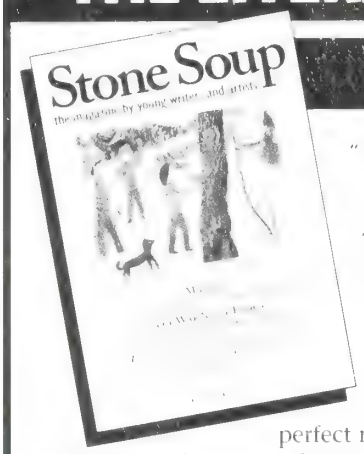
The morning notes of belea
ment and pugnacity lingered d
the clarification of differences. A
gument started over what to call
pregnancies, one conferee lobby
length for "replac[ing] the word
gitimacy' with 'abrogation of pa
responsibility.' " O
disagreed.

*Your mom asked you not t
with your bat inside, but you di
accidentally hit the leg of a table
only a small chip off the table ar
might not notice it. What do you*

I was mired in a Character C
folder of curricular materials.
tivities Preschool 1–6" str
moral problems suitable for to
cogitation. Illustrated ethical sa
for grade-schoolers carried echo
Sir John Marks Templeton (
spect is like a boomerang. If yo
spect others then in return they
respect you"). An exhibit of "pe
al dilemma" writing showed
schoolers honing their casuistic
titude and talent for self-lacera
Tuning out the group, I read a
Fred, who dropped a fly ball
championship game; life was a
ment of options for the studen
thor of this piece. *I could tease [
like all the other kids, I could
away from the situation, or I
stand up for Fred. If I joined in*

THE LITERARY MA

BY CHI



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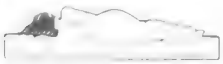
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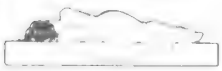
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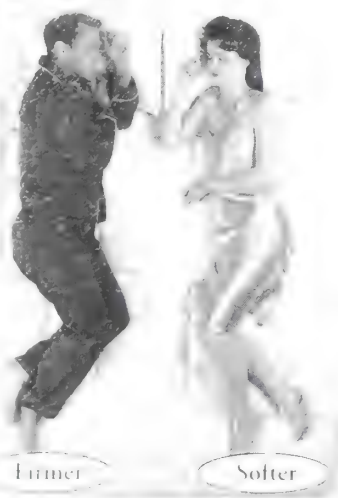
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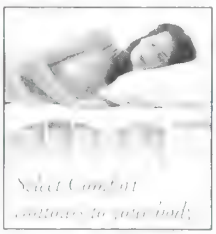






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The Only ... with ... Control

...suggested that they could easily h... 10 million schoolkids mouthing ... same jargon tomorrow. Was there ... limit to the zeal of the right-min... for battling phantoms? Did the ... thorities really believe that th... own absurd moral pretension... their own self-serving public p... cies bore no responsibility for ... fensive social behavior?

People of principle lament ... collapse of decorum and simulta... ously vote themselves annual p... sion subsidies and tax exempti... in the tens of billions of dollar... funds that build terraced perches ... country clubs and elsewhere, f... which to observe and discuss ... decline of values. They read w... approval attacks on mindless n... reveling in TV freak shows ... thwart every approach to level... equity in public-school financ... capable of moderating the mindl... ness. In the space of three years, ... total compensation of the ave... American CEO rises, in the t... of the age of downsizing, from f... times to ninety-three times tha... the average factory worker ... no sign of an executive per... mance leap (or drop in worker ... ductivity) to match the raise.

But here were the "goodie... Emerson's name for the self-con... ulatingly high-minded—"delibe... ing" as though these and rel... social realities were marginal ... unworthy of remark. The Asso... tion for Moral Education, the Pe... of Light Foundation, the Gir... Project, the "Enough Is Enou... Campaign, the Institute on Reli... and Democracy, the Resolving C... flict Creatively Program, Crit... Linkages Consulting, Citie... Schools, Inc., *Christianity To...* Students Taking a Right St... Children Now, the United Ch... of Christ, the American Bar As... ation, and scores more—all bat... ing on the same obliviousness. I... giving assent, direct or indirec... the proposition that the nati... decline of respect and discipl... having nothing to do with ... mounting greed and egomani... the privileged, can be reverse... supplying cops with value cards ... teaching upcoming generations ...

n nlet ize about pop thes
", u have a choice." Somebody
r I was talking at the front of
oom. "You can walk the two
a or there are buses around the
n on Pennsylvania. We have to
u to move right along."
s ill group was over. The con-
ferees had made it almost
to plenary.

T

he day looked better outside in
e lazing muggy light. Packed
n double-decker buses, dutiful-
w ting on the EOB steps to clear
u w, people sparked up cheerful-
ist amazing," said a Character
ts rep a couple of steps above
a fellow conferee, pointing his
t the White House next door.
man was talking about White
reaction to a recent drop-in
Tom Selleck, CC spokesman.
vybody tell all over themselves
they heard he was in, wanting
et tom, shaking his hand. He's
l. They all came down—Dave
n, McClarty . . ."
Ad been looking forward to ple-
to the featured speaker, that
illiam Galston's *Liberal Pur-*
(1991) wrestles shrewdly with
political theorists of fairness
Oakeshott to Rawls and be-
The book probes the link be-
the collapse of values and the
pse of fairness. It attempts to
om the truths of "traditionalists
] charge liberals with ignoring
ndermining self-discipline and
estraint" with the truths of "lib-
[who] charge traditionalists
ignoring or undermining the
nds of fairness, particularly
regard to the least fortunate
ers of society." I sought my in-
on to the conference partly out
osity about the author.
Galston showed up promptly—a
small-boned, late-fortyish, eu-
ious-voiced man with big Clin-
n hair (white). Affectionately, if
introduced by Etzioni as a
sopher-king," he described him-
omeone "trying to tell truth to
r." He told the conferees they
"an extraordinary assemblage"
dded that when, at that morn-
senior staff meeting, he had been
to do a briefing for the President

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ple came up to me and said [illegible]

[my emphasis] failing
appropriate moral com-
..., habits, and traits of characa-
... the next generation," and
... character education in the
schools as a promising solution. He
dismissed the notion that govern-
ment can [illegible] effectively
against greed ("laws and regulations
cannot adequately protect us against
selfishness . . .") and saluted the Clin-
... mmitment to "concern
... ic" like the
family, and for "respect[ing] and sup-
... of the bipartisan
'Character Counts' Coalition . . ."

"Seedbeds of virtue" — a true soul-
... — aroused the
troops of rectitude to an ovation. A
... ulatory subse-
quently formed. "I love what you're
doing," said one fan to Galston.
"Love it, love it, love it." The eu-
phoria lasted straight through ad-
journment to the famous Indian
... corporate spon-
... kindly pourin[illegible]

For a while it was comedy and chaos that came to mind when I reflected on "Character Building for a Democratic, Civil Society." I thought of the kid diarist struggling to cut down on brotherly insults and remembered myself suppressing a ... when I hap-
... ed but the part
... character building
took their turn toward brazenness,
... [illegible]
... [illegible]
... and Harlem. Natural enemies
... loud mouthing freedom in-
... visibly vilifying one anoth-
... [illegible]
... [illegible]
... [illegible]
... Tall bemuse-
... vn that "Christianity does not endorse unfettered ... I am." There seemed to be new ... Charles Murray ... pitched for lowering the boom ... helpless pregnant teenagers. ... Yankelovich was all nostalgia ... the yesteryear when you could ... ruined for life if you had a baby ... of wedlock. Everywhere ram... ... kept ... sweeps in housing projects, ... curfews, massive prison-build... programs, caning proposals, t... strikes and you're out, two years ... you're off, kill the deadbeat ... hang smokers, teach by-the-n... bers necking, lockboxes on TV ... jail cells for rappers.

What this country needs, I've ... to conclude, is a good counter to ... pillar virtues. For openers, try ... Never take a value card from a ... in uniform with a blaring siren.

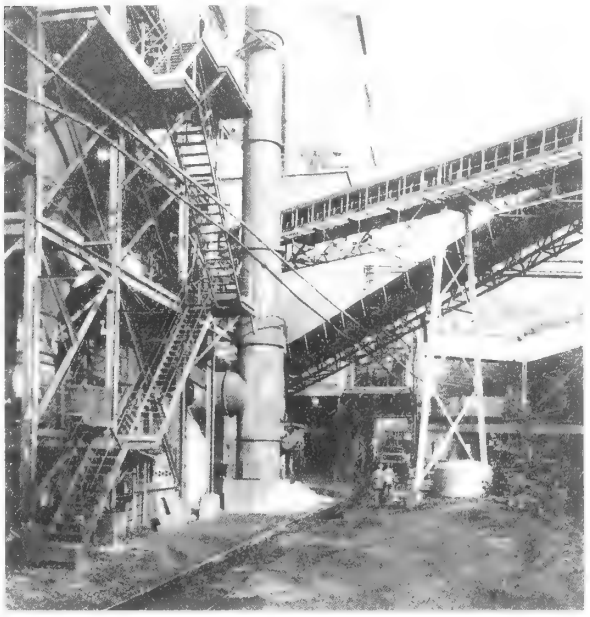
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THE CLOSING OF THE AMERICAN MINE

Oblivion comes to a West Virginia coal town

By Andy Yale



be rain blew in over the
before dawn and settled
tly in Tommy Creek
er. When the watchman's
was over, he set out in the
ly downpour to walk the
miles into town. It was
first rain in a long while,
t spattered on the rocks of
dry creek bed that paral-
ld the road. On the far
k, the coal belt ran with a
tant rustle. The watchman
ed on, past heaps of shale
covered with grass, past a
steel tank upended in a
h, past the sludge pond and
llow shotgun shack where
one was stirring. In the
le of the holler, the only
gs moving were the rain,
man, and the coal.

When he reached town, the
chman sat down on the bench in
t of Della's Tavern, now shut-
d. He wore an acrylic jacket the
r of new rust, frayed blue jeans,
r running shoes gray with coal
From where he sat he had an
nstructed view of downtown: the
office, the abandoned game
n, the playground, the second-
d-clothing store, the burned-out
cery. Beyond stood the city hall,
a pair of empty storefronts, Kel-
grocery, and a two-story house
h peeling chocolate paint and a
in the ground-floor window.

Yale is a writer and photographer in West Virginia.

"For Sale, $100 Down, $100 a Month. See Kelly." After a long time, a car drove slowly up the road. When it was opposite his bench, the watchman gravely raised his hand and waved.

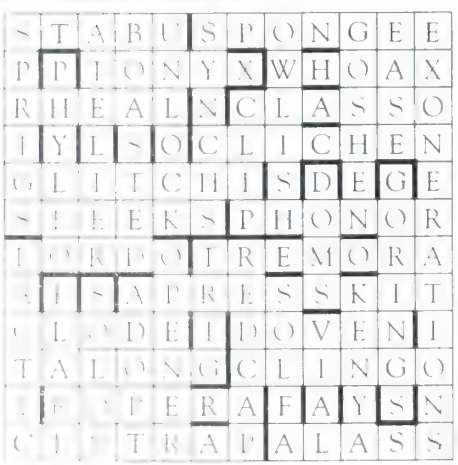
The town is Rhodell, and it sits at the center of the southern West Virginia coal seam, one of the richest in the world. Thirteen years had passed since I'd been down here, and as I drove into the coalfield, I entered a landscape I could scarcely recognize. Restaurants I'd eaten in, places I'd stayed were all boarded up. Twenty miles west of Rhodell, the huge tipple at Itmann, where 1,200 men once worked, was rusting in silence; the cluster of antique [illegible] closed. Even [illegible] cult to spot [illegible] camps, once the salient and inescapable feature of the region. The oppressive uniformity of company towns—with their identical houses in precise rows—had been lost within a jumble of mobile homes, junk cars, heavy machinery, and plywood shacks interspersed at random among the vestiges of the older settlements.

I had expected dying towns, but I couldn't reconcile the continued production of coal with the moribund communities I visited. Automation in the mines has been increasing—and employment declining—since the mid-1950s, but only in the last decade has the economic order, once so monolithic it seemed divinely sanctioned, met its demise. And only within the last year or so has it become possible to glimpse the lineaments of the new Appalachian dispensation.

In a Logan County camp, forty miles west of Rhodell, I met a retired miner named Willie Ann[illegible] explained the changing realities of life in coal country. [illegible] panies have done away with the company [illegible] camps, everybody used to know everybody's son's name, everybody's [illegible]

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had a dog, they knew what my d
name was. Used to be the miner
this camp would fill up the ball
on a Sunday." Andersen said that
mines I'd been looking for, whi
had remembered as being in or
the camps, were now located dee
the mountains, often behind barb
wire fences patrolled by guards w
shotguns. "There are kids in the c
field today," he added, "that ur
they see a lump of coal go down
road on one of these trucks, t
don't see a lump of coal."

The primary effect of the new
der in coal country seemed to be
fuseness. As I toured the coalfie
drove through towns with no st
no restaurants, no bars, no gas
tions, once-thriving towns like
Cucumber, Red Jacket, and Skyg
that had almost ceased to exist.
one Sunday morning, in the st
rain, I stumbled on Rhodell, a t
well advanced in the process of
becoming.

I recalled my first visit to the
in 1981, when a photography as
ment took me to the coalfield
McDowell County. At the ti
Main Streets in mining country
full of new cars, the taverns
packed with paying customers,
you couldn't book a motel room
cause of all the surveyors who'd c
to town to map new coal seams.
the real heyday of West Virginia
mining had been four decades e
Tootsie Farruggia came to Rhode
1948 to work in a movie theate
was a time when the town had lo
give: work, opportunity, money.
citement. When Tootsie and
husband, Charlie, who died last
opened their garage in 1951,
were competing with three other
ing stations. She remembers
brand of gas each one sold. A s
white-haired woman with bright
eyes, she recited the words tha
now a local creed in Rhodell ("
was a *booming* little town") an
called with distant tenderness
names of each of the eight groc
the hardware store, drugstore, je
er's, and movie theater. In her m
ory, the buses arrive again in Rh
from nearby Pineville and Bec
packed solid with miners, the
walks are crowded, the stores

ate. In those days, she said, h than 3,000 miners worked in ller.

T. warmth faded from her face e I asked her what the future r Rhodell. "I'd like to see it ack up, but I don't believe it l she said. "Years ago, lots of worked in the mines. Nowa- 's mostly mechanical. Call it s if you want to, but someday going to outsmart himself. e we'll all be sitting here doing nothing, with nobody working at all."

During my ten days in and Rhodell, it rained constantly. he afternoon the clouds van- e and the sky over Rhodell a shimmering, medieval blue. flooded through the open door la's Tavern and lay gently on orn chromium barstool where y Cox was drinking the day's eer. Behind the bar, Della Mae sat with her daughter, Dee who has run the tavern for the ve years. Bobby, Bud, Jimmy, and Bimbo—all miners, past esent—gathered at the bar. one drank Budweiser and dis- l the subject that preoccupies s throughout the state: the fate United Mine Workers and its ent, Rich Trumka.

wey spoke first: "They elected yer president of the UMW a e of years back, and it's been hill ever since."

heard he was an ex–coal min- ella answered.

ou know he ain't no miner," y shot back. "Don't act like He's a *lawyer*."

around him, the men nodded. wasn't certain whether Trumka coal miner or a lawyer, but she re of one thing: the union had 's clout. "Look at the men work- r Maben Energy," she said. "Six week, ten hours a day."

sed to be a forty-hour week," said.

pposed to be a union mine," insisted, "but they're working ut a contract. A couple of years ou couldn't get a miner to work ut a contract. Contract expired, went home. To my opinion, the union's post-dead state.

Della's words provoked a sudden silence. One of the most difficult losses the town has sustained is the growing disenchantment with the UMW. Once the object of a quasi-religious veneration, the union began five years ago to rely on decentralized, "selective" strikes, a tactic that miners blame for fragmenting the workforce and producing a succession of weak contracts.

"Nowadays, the union ain't really a force in the mines," said Bud, one of two active miners in the tavern. "Twenty years ago, if I was working beside a union man and I was making ten dollars an hour, they'd shut it down right then. Now you got men making five bucks an hour working beside union men, and ain't shit said. You just keep your mouth shut and do your job."

During the time I spent in Rhodell, the phrase I heard the most often (after the liturgical "This was a booming little town") was "Please don't use my name." Talking to a reporter was seen as risky business. The atmosphere in Rhodell gave sudden life to old stories I'd heard about bad times before the union, when company thugs were the unquestioned law in the camps. The thugs are gone, but so, perhaps, is the need for them.

While Bud and I talked, Dave and Bimbo circled the pool table. After scratching on the eight ball, Bimbo bought two beers and handed one to Dave. They lounged on the bench outside the tavern, under the blue sky. An empty coal truck went by in a cloud of dust. Dave took a pull on his beer. "The heart of the coalfield," he said, and they both laughed.

"Yeah," Bimbo said, "this was it. This was the titty, where they sucked the black gold out the earth."

Dave snorted. "Hell, they're *still* sucking. Just we ain't getting our share no more."

Bimbo and Dave represent a class new to the coalfield: ex-miners in their forties who will never dig coal again. Lacking the twenty years in the mines required to earn an insurance card, they have no health coverage. They will never receive

Ten years a

completed the shift from a solid working-class community to a place where virtually everybody gets some sort of monthly check without hurting a lick. The town's mayor estimates that 98 percent of his constituents are on welfare or a pension. This steady but limited cash flow keeps Rhodell's few businesses barely solvent, but as older pensioners die off and the generation now in its forties ages, even this will dry up.

Although cheap foreign coal has given West Virginia's product a run for its money, unemployment in the coalfield today is not linked to low demand, thanks to falling wages and steady orders from public-utility companies. Nor are the current woes the result of depletion, for though the best seams have been mined, extensive reserves of high-quality coal remain. Men like Bimbo and Dave are idle because of complex structural changes in the industry. When automation made it possible to operate with smaller crews, huge producers like A.T. Massey and Island Creek turned the actual production of coal over to local contractors while retaining title to their coal lands and tipples. The trend has accelerated in the last decade, making smaller mines the rule. The contractors get the "easy coal" and fold up, usually within seven to nine years. The larger mines of yore often produced for fifty years. And mines that once employed 500 men now require fewer than 100. Statistics reflect these changes neatly. In the 1950s coal accounted for 25 percent of West Virginia's jobs. [illegible] is mined now than forty years ago.

As the [illegible] has fragmented, the impact has been felt throughout the coalfield

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The handful of large producers has given way to a constantly shifting proliferation of small contractors, who bear responsibility for paying the miners' UMW benefits. Contractors frequently go bankrupt, leaving huge debts and unpaid benefits. It's a process that leaves men like Dave and Bimbo out in the cold.

In the back booth, Bud and his old friend Ronny sat talking about Paul Kizer, owner of Maben Energy, which runs the few mines still operating around Rhodell. "Paul Kizer got a big-ass house on Flat Top Lake," Ronny said.

"Got to give the man credit," Bud added. "He's a genius. You talking billions."

"And if he goes bankrupt, you can't touch his money," Ronny called over his shoulder as he stood up to play the winner at eight ball. "You understand what I'm saying?"

Bud nodded. At twenty-two, he has been a miner for three years. He's become accustomed to frequent layoffs, to eighty-hour weeks, to getting beat out of his pay when a mine closes. When the contractor he worked for closed two years ago, the company owed him overtime and vacation pay, about $6,000 altogether. He got a check in the mail from the labor board last month for $476. He'll never see the rest of the money.

"The coal companies say they ain't doing so good, but there's still a lot of money being made," Bud observed. "In the last ten years, they made a billion dollars coming out of this holler." He paused. "And this town last year got $100 in taxes for the coal that's been through. And look at it—it's a dump."

Ronny drifted back from the pool table. "This town's gonna be a dead motherfucker before long. When this bar closes, all you're going to have is a little bitty store with coal trucks running over the top of it." (Within a few weeks of my visit Della's Tavern did indeed close its doors for the last time.)

Paul Kizer is a local boy made good, a former schoolteacher turned government mine inspector who

Tommy Creek

tinues to operate Maben Energy.

Miners in Rhodell view

tant administrator.

ible symbols of the fortune still made in coal, his ostentatious lifestyle has caused people in Rhodell to become deeply cynical of coal companies and their constant complaints about tight economics. Many people wondered about the exact relationship between Paul Kizer, Maben Energy, and Westmoreland Coal.

When Paul Kizer left his job as a mine inspector in the late 1970s, it was to take over the operation of Westmoreland's failing Maben mine. He managed that property so successfully that Westmoreland soon gave him other leases. All the coal lands around Rhodell were once Westmoreland properties, but by the early Eighties, various companies owned by Kizer were doing the actual mining. The coal was sold at the East Gulf tipple, which Maben acquired from Westmoreland. Many local people suspected that Kizer was just a front man and that Maben Energy was nothing more than Westmoreland Coal in drag. By having Kizer handle production, Westmoreland was able to duck UMW contractual commitments.

Kizer is notorious for shunning publicity; numerous calls to his office yielded no reply. Unable to meet the man himself, I thought I'd observe him through the shadow he casts, by taking a look at one of his properties, the mines at the head of Tommy Creek holler.

The road starts at City Hall, runs three miles up Tommy Creek, and dead-ends at the bathhouse of Stoney Coal Company #1 Mine. The bathhouse is a grim cinder-block rectangle, without windows, painted a dirty brown. It sits in a muddy lot strewn with a welter of junk-machine parts, hydraulic hose, huge pipes, an engine block, rusting cable. The day I visited, black puddles dot-

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ted the obsidian mud. A bank of transformers hummed inside a chain-link fence. Near the mine portal, a conveyor dumped coal onto a growing pile. Other conveyors moved

machinery was running, but not a single person was in sight.

The portal of the mine is a rectangular hole in the cliffside, barely four

track emerge. There is no sign or emblem to denote this meager opening as a fount of wealth, no indication that it gives access to a Stygian darkness in which men labor six days a week, ten hours daily, in contra-

UMW rules, though this is nominally a union mine. Like the conveyors, transformers, and fan motors running ceaselessly, the hole in the cliff displays no connection to the world of men.

The mine office was also deserted, a spartan room dominated by what first appeared to be an outsized city map but was actually a complex schematic of the mines. Unnerved by the absence of people, I crossed to a neighboring building with big garage doors, the repair shop for the mine's equipment. Here, surrounded by wrenches, electrical fittings, racks of nuts and bolts, huge banks of batteries, and oxyacetylene tanks, I found a lone man. Gray-haired and wearing gray coveralls, he was repairing a high-tension cable with a pocketknife, a screwdriver, and a roll of black tape.

He was called Mouse, and his job was to oversee the shop at the center of the mine's operation. Deliveries arrived in steady succession, truckloads of roof bolts, acetylene gas, rebuilt electric motors, each accompanied by an invoice for Mouse to sign. It takes $10,000 a day in supplies to run this mine, he said.

Mouse worked in a continuous flux, dancing from repair jobs to invoices to the bank of four

telephones that squawked erratically from the wall behind his desk. He was in touch with the various crews underground, with the truck that patrols the outside belt lines, and with the end-loader crew working the scattered coal stockpiles. The telephones crackled constantly

breakdowns: smoking motor

bad breakers. Voices erupt

outrage into the room—"Y

going to have to put some r

in this belt. It's dumping co

the damned ground!" Mouse c

softly, yelled, "Okay, chief,"

the handset, paged som

named Eddie on another p

and returned to the battery ch

he'd been tinkering with.

Within a few minutes, the

came banging out of the mine

like something in a 1930s car

Painted white and blue and sm

with rock dust, the vehicle

whimsical quality that was enh

by the operator sitting crossw

the direction of travel, a litt

lever in front of him serving as

brake and throttle. In motion

machine had the anachron

charm of a tin windup toy from

ern Europe.

The motor clanked throug

garage door Mouse had thrown

and halted before a battery ch

While Mouse hooked the char

the motor's battery bank, a m

man hauled himself out of the

ator's seat. Eddie, the mine

seemed to thrive on the atmos

of boundless chaos in whic

moved—the faithless machine

were always breaking down an

belt that needed constant wat

He came out of the mine at M

call to deal with the belt line's

rebellion, bringing the motor

ed to take the second shift do

work.

The shift began to drift in

man at a time, until they we

standing around the motor.

shop crackled with a proletaria

ergy, a manic display of high s

talking, joking. Although m

these seemingly vigorous me

chronic health problems—

lung, silicosis, arthritis, bac

juries—there was a huge diffe

in mood between these miner

the townspeople. A union mi

here makes about $17 an hou

a nonunion "outside man"

Mouse clears $10 or $12, but it

work itself—not the money—

keeps them here.

Suddenly, without a signal,

iled into the motor. Mouse
the garage door open, and
whistling buzz the motor dis-
red into the mine portal
it arrived at the coal face, the
uft was waiting to be shuttled
Vaiting, too, in rare idleness,
e continuous miner. Seeming
mbled from a paddlewheel, a
dustpan, and a bucket of
s, this is the machine that
the Tommy Creek operation
ible. With a single operator, it
multaneously perform tasks
nce kept ten men busy. Before
anization, coal was undercut,
t, fragmented with explosives,
and-loaded into railcars. Now
otary cutters do all the work at
They chew into the coal with
ndous power, forcing the min-
onto a conveyor beneath the
ine, which empties onto a belt
ng to the surface. As low-tech
mine's other equipment, the
nuous miner operates in an at-
here turbid with dust, wrench-
oise, and imminent danger. It is
ncommon for the coal seam to
se onto the machine. When a
nt roof fall at Tommy Creek
d a continuous miner, only the
canopy over his seat saved the
ator. Fellow workers dug him
n an hour; it took more than
weeks to extricate the machine.
fter the second shift had depart-
he holler around the portal was
n flooded by the relentless
of machinery. Lulled by that
anical hum, I searched the sur-
dings for signs of the post-
strial age and found none.
e didn't seem to be a floppy
on the site, let alone computer
ts or videographics displaying
mensions of the coal seam
high-tech paraphernalia I'd ex-
ed. Nor was coal being faxed
the mine to the tipple, it was
ng the trip on a motorized belt
nade of rubber and steel.

he three-mile-long belt line,
h runs down the holler to East
tipple, tunneling through a
ntain on the way, is a local
ler, the dominant feature on
andscape. The belt line runs
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Continued on page 86

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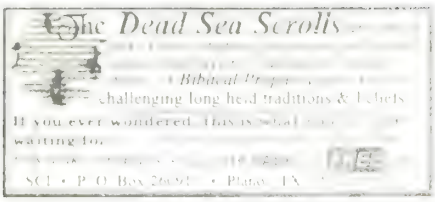
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Continued from page 53

except when there's a stoppage the tipple. Built in 1990 at a cos some $15 million, the three-fo wide belt line is the newest techn ogy the area can boast. Yet in way—except magnitude—doe differ from conveyors that were u in the mines fifty years ago.

The belt line follows Tom Creek out of the holler. Looking some nightmare toy—a giant a minum worm—it runs for three m through empty country until reaches its terminus at East G Belt lines have moved coal throu the hollers around Rhodell since town was founded in 1907; ea maps show mines at the foot of M Street. In the life of the townspeo coal has always been *the* central f and moving coal meant mov money, some of which inevita made its way into everyone's pock

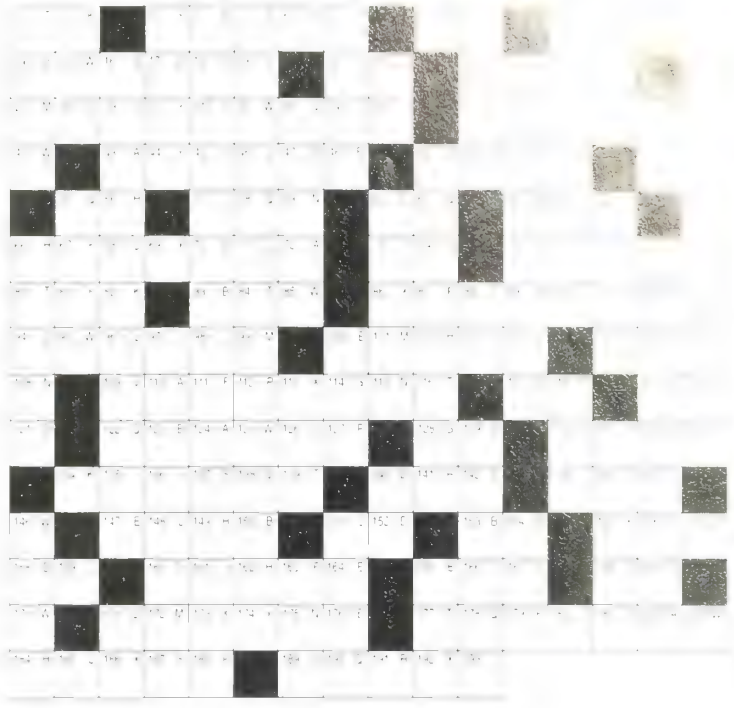
But today, in a town like Rhod coal moving in vast quantitie no longer an index of local pr perity. The town struggles to c tain two disparate poles of American experience—raw ene and irreversible decay. While almost surreal gigantism swells mine's outdated technology, m ing it possible for machines to tract more coal from the ea with less and less human as tance, life in town spirals dow ward, shrinking in sco richness, and purpose.

As I drove out of Rhodell, b to the main highway, the rain sw in from the west. It fell on the of shotgun shacks, on the burn out grocery, on the street in fron the shuttered tavern. It ripplec the sludge pond and wet the lin wash behind the red house at railroad crossing. It moved up holler, drumming on the alumi shield of the belt line. The rain on the shale heap and on Ron Bimbo where they lay under R car struggling to replace a bro starter. Rising over ridge and ho it darkened the whole town laid beneath it: the belt line endin the tipple, the juggernaut trucks riving to collect the coal. The collected in the gutters and in a minutes ran black.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC NO. 144

by Thomas H. Middleton

The diagram, when filled in, will contain a quotation from a published work. The numbered squares in the diagram correspond to the numbered blanks under the WORDS. The WORDS form an acrostic: the first letter of each spells the name of the author and the title of the work from which the quotation is taken. The letter in the upper right-hand corner of each square indicates the WORD containing the letter to be entered in that square. Contest rules and the solution to last month's puzzle appear on page 75.



A. Sobriquet for Eddie Cantor (2 wds.)
8 110 182 43 132 10 124 72 20

B. Duplicate, replica (2 wds.)
51 55 123 133 34 45 -- 4 92 150

C. Figure of speech, both sharp and dull
73 156 19 78 60 71 21 126

D. Rodgers & Hart tune from *The Boys from Syracuse* (4 wds.)
20 63 70 88 158 144 37 105 140 17 6 152 180 154

E. Showy and cheap
16 165 100 147 164 176

F. New York city on Lake Erie, near Buffalo
24 81 35 133 67 3 163 179 111 157

G. Throw light on, clarify
36 130 5 160 28 94 114 126 52

H. Opaque blush mineral
149 79 102 89 66 120 184 56 162

I. Shockingly dreadful
143 57 135 45 97 103

J. Light, ecstatic, heavenly
29 151 106 136 13 193 98 161

K. Narcissus
134 93 82 2 118

L. Boors, oafs
96 185 148 159 145

M. Witty, droll, wry
53 77 101 99 172 27

N. Opening at the top of the larynx
115 175 49 59 54 91 105

O. Make tracks, get a move on (2 wds.)
171 47 31 12 131 129 121 168 62

P. Bolt or rod placed through a chain, e.g., to bind or anchor it
142 76 112 127 188 87

Q. Coordinated costume, set
178 58 122 61 55 190

R. Light, full of air
11 39 141 75 74 191

S. Jockey or jouster, e.g.
64 65 90 9 104 137 18 117 187 169

T. With precision and exactitude
84 1 177 116 80 139

U. Plant of E. Asia having an aromatic root used medicinally
68 34 166 189 181 119 46

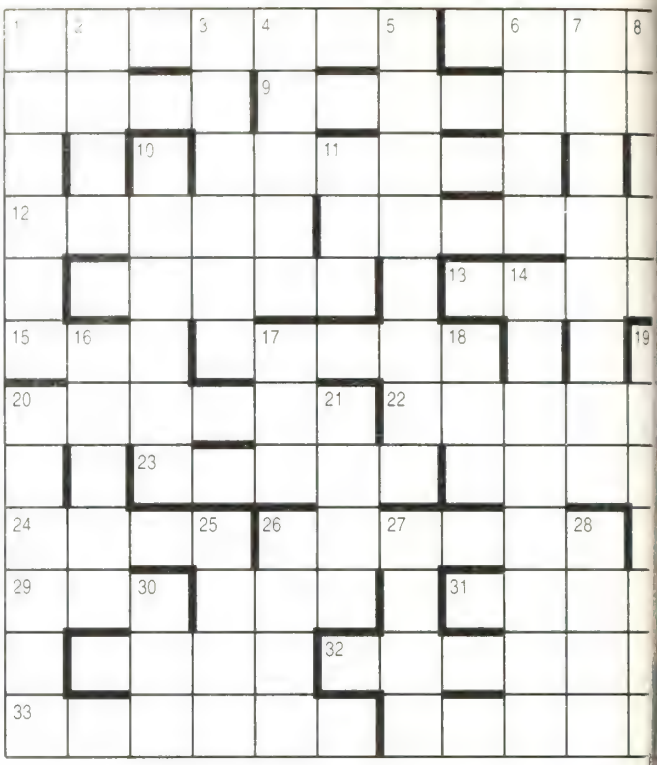
V. Hoists
109 107 33 138 41

W. Script once considered the standard of fine penmanship, exactness (2 wds.)
32 183 170 25 125 95 15 42

X. Press closely, as in affection or for comfort
56 136 1 [illegible]

Y. Female servant or attendant
[illegible] 44 [illegible] 69 23 40 167

PUZZLE



... by Richard Maltby Jr. and E. R. Galli

( ) ... grouped in the diagram) ... across rows. To identify ... twelve words, make a selection from the ... answers to the Menu clues. ... all twelve words. In short order, the correct placement will become ap-

Clue answers include one proper name and three foreign words. The solution to last month's puzzle ap-

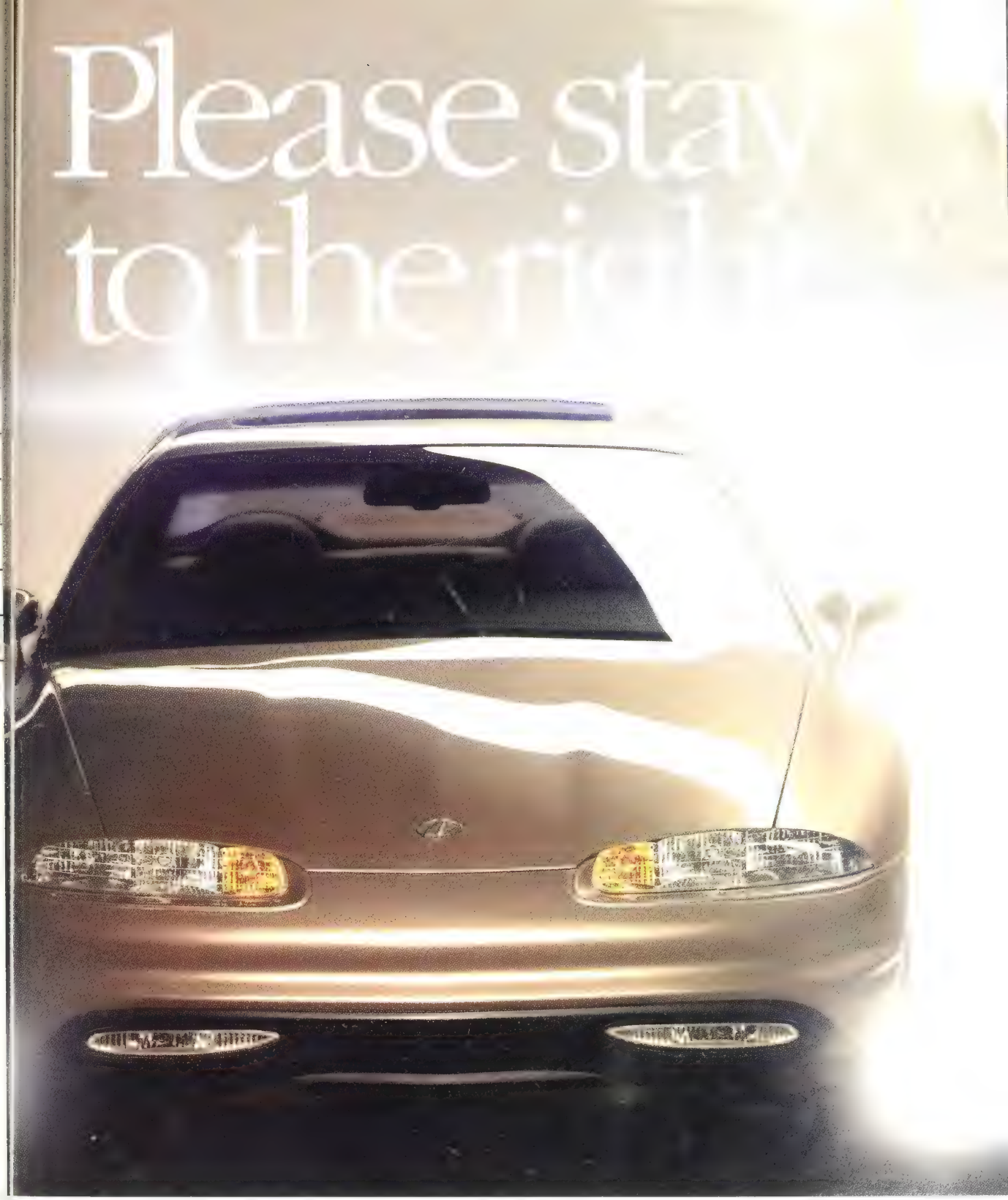
2. Last opportunity to watch the evening news?
3. Supernumerary with bottle of scotch: big man
7. Point one staff person who makes a Jewish service
8. What *Adam's Rib* and *Jackie O.* have in common?
9. Pliv just before Epiphany
10. Quaver, go in the . . . the . . . potty
11. C to D in music has a ring—it's a bit of hell to Dante

1. Darn squish, peas, apple (7)
9. Singular cereal? Ta-ta (7)
Castrated animal, when inside, can poison (5)
Soar as a hero in Spain (4)
Set fire to Roman church (5)
Where you won't find those on the outs, I hear! (4)
Little dog sounds Italian—I'm out of here (4)

1. Five in motley in America get Ivory Snow and 32
2. Where to get one past a parrot in *Aladdin* (4)

3. Cantor Fisher, Doctor of English, passes away (6)
4. Where the action is seen but not heard? Quite the opposite (5)
5. Keeps after, in an afterthought, the evil sister (8)
6. Place for a star of *The Crying Game* (4)
7. Clearly defined district in Connecticut (8)
8. Here in the Marines one sneaker (?) is tied to another (5)
10. Dolt can become hoaxed (6)
11. Get firm that will give you a leg up (3)
14. "Look Back in Concern"—musical event (8)
16. Redheaded chick who's all grown up—it takes one back (5)
17. Bring in fish, cut the head off fish (3)
18. Worker loses head for a long time (3)
19. Idol in bed is a big drag! (7)
20. The best part of Haydn's First Double Quartet (6)
21. Beethoven's in no way heard a number of his symphonies (4)
25. X-rated movies, e.g., can give rise to a cure for 13 or 29 Across (4)
26. Concern about alien race (4)
27. In re: bounced check (4)
28. Ache from head to toe? Just the opposite, respectively (4)
30. Being drunk, almost throw up (3)

... ...ted diagram with name and address to "Short Order," *Harper's Magazine*, 666 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012. If ... the first three correct solutions opened at random will ... ... February issue. Winners of the October puzzle, "Double-... Sue Davidson Lowe, Madison, Connecticut



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